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THE SOVIET PEASANTRY

AN OUTLINE HISTORY
(1917-1970)



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СОВЕТСКОЕ КРЕСТЬЯНСТВО

На английском языке

The book is based on documentary facts which illustrate the history of Soviet peasantry after the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917. Much space is devoted to an analysis of the social and economic changes that have taken place in the countryside. The book gives comprehensive coverage of the early events and latter-day developments. In addition there are chapters on the special aspects of the evolution of the peasantry in the Union and autonomous republics.

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PREFACE

Before the Great October Socialist Revolution and in the first decade after it had been accomplished four-fifths of Russia's population lived in the country; agriculture was their main livelihood. The majority of these people were farmers—small-scale producers who ran private farmsteads, employing the labour of members of the family and their own means of production. After socialism had triumphed, the peasantry became a class of collective workers united in production co-operatives which jointly owned the means of production and which jointly managed their own common economy. Collectivisation, which was a decisive step taken by the Soviet peasantry towards socialism, reformed production relations and changed farm labour and the entire way of life in the country; it radically changed the position of peasants and their moral character. Transition to collective forms of work laid the foundation for the peasantry's active participation in building communism—the society in which all classes will disappear once and for all and in which there will be no distinctions in the social position and make-up of workers, peasants or intellectuals.

The history of the Soviet peasantry is the history of the majority of Soviet people, and of contemporary collective farmers who account for only a fifth of the country's population. This is because many former peasants became workers on state farms, joined the ranks of the rural intellectuals and office employees, or went to live in towns. It must be remembered that the peasantry is the most numerous social and economic class in the world.

At the beginning of the 20th century Russia was to a certain extent a model

of the contemporary world. Its social and economic system incorporated various modes of economics—advanced industrial and financial capitalism in towns, and semi-feudal, patriarchal relations in the countryside. It is, therefore, easy to see why the world today, particularly the agricultural countries of the Third World, faces the same social problems which were encountered during the October Revolution in Russia and the subsequent progress of socialism. The Soviet Union's fifty years' history illustrates the prospects of mankind's future; it affirms the viability and correctness of Marxism-Leninism. This is why the Soviet Union's experience, particularly in regard to the agrarian problem, is followed with great attention by the whole world; this is why no one can remain indifferent to the solution of this problem.

The peasantry in the USSR, just as the rest of the population, is multinational in composition. Before the victory of socialism the national groups of peasants stood on different levels. They had different languages, different modes of life, different modes of production, different cultural and social standards. On the eve of the October Revolution most peasants (Ukrainians, Russians, Byelorussians, Georgians, Armenians, Tartars, etc.) had gone a long way towards achieving capitalism; they were incorporated, in different degrees, by the various classes of the bourgeois society. However, some major national groups amongst the peasantry which had failed to take the capitalist road of development retained feudal or even patriarchal relations. This was true of peasants in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kirghizia, Turkmenia, the North Caucasus, Buryat-Mongolia, Yakutia and other parts of the country. They all had one feature in common—the domination of patriarchal and feudal relations. These peoples by-passed capitalism on the road to socialism. Many of the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa have also taken the non-capitalist road of development.

Lenin's co-operative plan charted the course to socialism for the peasantry of all nationalities. Its actual implementation, however, depended on the level of society's development, the character of production and the customs of the people in question. Because of the various social conditions which have arisen, the resulting peculiarities in the forms,

methods and rates of social and economic transformation in different national districts the Soviet Union's experience in building socialism has assumed great historical significance.

* * *

A big group of researchers—historians, economists and sociologists—are engaged in the scientific elaboration of the history of the Soviet peasantry. Much has been accomplished. Light is being thrown on the progress of Soviet peasantry in conditions of socialist and communist construction and on the radical reorganisation undertaken by Soviet power in agriculture, labour, social relations, culture and everyday life in the country.

Today there are real opportunities for compiling a comprehensive history of Soviet peasantry during the years of Soviet power. This book is one of the first attempts to draw such a historical picture and, therefore, it cannot aspire to serve as a comprehensive work. The authors tried merely to give an outline of the road travelled by the Soviet peasantry, and of the social, economic, political and cultural changes in the country at the different stages of socialist transformation and communist construction.

The book was compiled by a group of authors. In the section "The Peasantry During the October Revolution and the Civil War" Chapter I was written by S. M. Dubrovsky and V. V. Kabanov; Chapter II by G. V. Sharapov; Chapter III by V. V. Kabanov; in the section "The Countryside and the New Economic Policy" Chapter I was written by Y. A. Polyakov, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences; Chapters II and III by V. P. Danilov; in the section "Socialist Reorganisation of Agriculture" Chapters I and II were written by V. P. Danilov; Chapters III and IV by Y. S. Borisov; Chapter V by I. Y. Zelenin; the section "The Peasantry in the National Struggle Against Nazi Germany" was written by Y. V. Arutyunian; in the section "The Concluding Stage of Socialist Construction" Chapter I was written by I. M. Volkov and Y. V. Arutyunian; Chapter II by A. P. Tyurina and Y. V. Arutyunian; in

the section "Collective Farms Today" Chapter I was contributed by R. F. Vinokurova; Chapters II and III by V. P. Danilov and A. P. Tyurina; Chapter IV by R. F. Vinokurova, V. P. Danilov and A. P. Tyurina. The preface and the concluding article were written by the editorial staff.

The English edition is a concise translation from the second Russian edition of 1973.

THE PEASANTRY DURING THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE CIVIL WAR

I. THE COUNTRYSIDE BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

THE DOUBLE YOKE

There has never been a golden age for peasants or the rest of mankind.

In ancient times nearly everyone was a farmer. This is why farmers and cattle-breeders became the most numerous socio-economic class after the birth of the class society.

Farmers have always been engaged in agriculture or cattle-breeding. The farmer supplied society and the ruling classes with food, clothes and shoes. The peasants shouldered the full weight of direct and indirect taxation, the corvée and military conscription. Russia was an agricultural country. This fact predetermined its social evolution, and the character and trends of its literature, arts, social thought and the revolutionary movement. The agrarian question was the problem of problems in pre-revolutionary Russia.

Russian peasants suffered through the grim years of serfdom. The landlords, backed by the tsarist autocracy, seized vast territories and compelled millions of peasants to sustain them. Peasants were regarded as the property of feudal landlords. They were bought and sold like cattle. They were lost in card games or exchanged for dogs. All their offences were mercilessly punished.

Peasants, Cossacks, and peoples in Russia's outlying territories revolted time and again. History tells us of the uprisings by Ivan Bolotnikov in 1606-1607; Stepan Razin, in 1670-1671; Kondraty Bulavin, in 1707-1708; the Bashki-

rians, in 1735-1740, and Yemelyan Pugachev, in 1773-1774.

The revolts were cruelly suppressed. But they revealed the depth of the people's hatred for the feudal lords. The fear of revolts compelled them to abolish the feudal system. As Alexander II said, "It is better to free the peasants from the top than to let them liberate themselves." The agrarian reform was accelerated by the Crimean War and the defeat of feudal Russia. Feudalism became an obstacle to the country's economic development.

The reform was prepared by the feudal lords themselves. On February 19, 1861, the tsar signed the Decree on Reforms. The peasants were made free; landlords were forbidden to sell, purchase, exchange or mortgage them. But the peasants were obliged to work for the landlords for a period of two years.

The gentry retained and even increased their land holdings. The peasants lost quite a considerable portion of their land. At least some 720,000 of the former manor serfs were deprived of land; 600,000 farming families joined the ranks of small-plot holders. They received so-called gratis plots—the equivalent of one-quarter the size of usual plots—as a way out of the shackling obligations to redeem the land. The best ploughlands were cut off from the peasants. In the European part of Russia 20 per cent of fertile land was taken away from the peasants. The peasants usually had no access to watering-places, pastureland or forests. Landlords' fields were interspersed with peasant holdings, and that ensured the landlords income from fines or from leasing the intruding strips. These strips helped the landlords to keep the peasants under their yoke.

The landlords received an enormous contribution for the land which was given over to the peasantry. The government assumed the obligation to grant credits to peasants for settling accounts with the owners, and it extended the repayment to 49½ years at an annual interest of 5 per cent. In 1861 the cost of all ploughland was estimated at 897 million rubles; by 1905 the peasants had paid for it 1,574 million rubles.

The peasants, of course, were disgusted. In the first months after the reform, there were 647 uprisings against

the landlords and the troops which were sent to support them.

The reform accelerated the economic and political development of Russia.

The ruined peasants sought work in factories, on construction sites, railways or in rich estates. Feudal slavery was replaced by capitalist slavery. But the feudal system retained its positions for quite a long time.

Semi-feudal farm holdings in post-reform Russia were the basis for the economic and political domination of feudal landlords. In 1905 peasants of 50 European gubernias had only about 140 million hectares (35.1 per cent) of the total of almost 396 million hectares of fertile land; private farmers owned nearly 102 million hectares (25.8 per cent); the government, the crown, the church and monasteries owned about 155 million hectares (39.1 per cent).

Most of the agricultural estates were in the possession of the gentry. Some 30,000 landlords owned nearly 70 million hectares, i.e., they had an average of 2,333 hectares. The 700 richest landowners had 21 million hectares. Each of them possessed on average 30,000 hectares. The family of Tsar Nicholas II owned 7 million hectares, i.e., more land than was owned by half a million peasant families. The majority of peasants did not have sufficient land to sustain themselves. They had to pay hundreds of millions of rubles in rent. This absorbed as much as 34 per cent of the gross and 81.1 per cent of the net income which the peasants derived from their leased land.

The exploitation of peasants was accompanied by extortion by the tsarist government. Taxes accounted for 15.4 per cent of the gross and 36.8 per cent of the net income of the peasants.

Capitalism brought new trials for the peasantry. It ushered in class stratification. Some peasants became richer, others, poorer. Some had to agree to lease land from landowners at unreasonable rates, others became seasonal farmhands. Quite a number of peasants purchased land from the landlords or leased, at next to nothing, land from poor peasants; many peasants became owners of inns, wind-mills or hulling mills. Some were ruined by merchants and usurers.

The majority of peasants went bankrupt and joined the

ranks of the proletariat or lumpen proletariat. Only a small group of stubborn and energetic peasants began to grab peasant lands. Approximately 46.8 per cent of the allotted land was owned by 2,100,000 rich farmers, and the remaining 53.2 per cent by 82.3 per cent of poor or middle peasants. The number of peasants owning neither land, nor horse, nor cow was growing. On the eve of the revolution about 65 per cent were poor peasants, 20 per cent middle peasants and only 15 per cent rich peasants.

Political inequality aggravated the position of the peasantry. The machinery of tsarist power, its police and court were under the control of landlords and other exploiters. The landlords acted as ruthless dictators in the countryside. The peasants were deprived of all elementary human rights. The only schools they were allowed to attend were elementary schools which taught three R's and the Gospel. The peasant had no right to go to live in town without permission from the authorities. Special class courts were established for peasants. The peasants had to obey district police authorities, who knew no other language but intimidation and threats.

Poverty and hunger were the lot of countryfolk. Poor harvests occurred every three years. Thousands of peasants perished during the famine of 1891. Extreme poverty and hunger gave rise to epidemics and high mortality.

THE COUNTRYSIDE DURING THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Revolutionary fervour was mounting at the turn of the 20th century. Frequent peasant uprisings were the forerunners of the coming revolutionary storm.

Police reports and complaints by landlords warned of "the mounting destructive feeling among peasants".

Mass peasant uprisings took place in 1902. In the Ukraine more than 100 estates were destroyed in a few days. The wave of uprisings spread through the Volga region, the Baltic

area, and the Caucasus. They were suppressed: but not for long.

The Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 infuriated the masses. The defeat of the tsarist armies was indicative of the decay of the regime and it helped accelerate the explosion of the revolution.

Workers and peasants launched an attack against the autocracy to clear away all the remnants of feudalism. The uprisings in the countryside were a direct result of the revolt of workers in St. Petersburg after Bloody Sunday on January 9, 1905¹.

The country was rocked by strikes that had the backing of all strata of the population. A great role was played by workers who were exiled for their participation in previous strikes; many of them returned to villages and told the peasants about the revolution against capitalists and landlords. People demanded land; peasants with forks and axes attacked the landlords, destroyed their holdings and seized their cattle and grain.

Peasant uprisings occurred almost simultaneously in the central regions of Russia, Georgia and the Baltic area. In February 1905 the peasant movement assumed tremendous proportions; by the autumn it had turned into a real war against the landlords in 240 districts of the European part of Russia, i.e., in half of all the districts outside the Baltic area and the Caucasus. A total of 3,228 peasant uprisings were registered in 1905; when the revolution abated in 1906, there were 2,600 uprisings, and 1,337 in 1907—a total of 7,165 uprisings. Lenin said that the first Russian revolution was a peasant revolution.

In some places where the revolutionary struggle was particularly ruthless and where the influence of the industrial proletariat was particularly great, the peasants not only ruined landlords and drove away the police, but also took power into their own hands.

In October and November of 1905 peasants took power over practically the whole of the Sumy district in Kharkov

¹ On that day the peaceful demonstration which brought the petition to the tsar was shot by police and troops.

Gubernia. Peasants also elected their own authorities in the villages of Tsarevshchina and Sary Buyan of Samara district. A peasant republic lasted from October 31, 1905 to July 18, 1906 in the Markovo volost¹, Moscow Gubernia.

The peasants' hatred was first turned towards the estates, which were the pillars of landlords and the tsarist regime. More than 2,000 estates were destroyed. The property—land, livestock and farm implements were distributed among the insurgents.

Tsarism succeeded in suppressing the uprisings for a while. A regime of unprecedented bloody terror was established in the country. Punitive detachments swept with fire and sword across the country, hundreds and thousands of workers and peasants were shot, thousands were thrown into prison or exiled to Siberia.

The bloody terror against the revolutionary peasantry was vehemently condemned by the progressive public in Russia. In 1908 Lev Tolstoi wrote in his famous article "I Denounce": "Twelve of those who feed us, whom we are corrupting to our best ability, whom we turn into addicts of vodka and belief, terrible in its falsity, a belief which we ourselves disdain but which we stubbornly foist upon them—twelve of these men have been strangled with ropes by the very people whom they fed, by the very people who corrupted them.... This is not the only crime and these twelve deluded people are not the only victims. Year after year hundreds and thousands of other deluded people fall victims...."

The revolution of 1905-1907 was a lesson for the country's working class and peasantry. It proved that only the working class could be the genuine leader of the revolution and that the masses of peasants, irrespective of their errors and mistakes, were ready to unite with the working class; it proved that the victory over autocracy, capitalism and the landlords could only be achieved through the alliance of the working class and the peasantry.

¹ An administrative unit smaller than a district (it usually comprised several volosts.)—Tr.

STOLYPIN AND HIS FAITH IN THE KULAKS

After the revolution of 1905-1907 tsarism decided to assist the kulaks and form an alliance with them against poor and middle peasants who were destroying the estates. The government hoped to prop up the staggering monarchy with the political and economic assistance of the kulaks. Minister Stolypin said in the State Duma (Assembly) that the government was "relying not on beggars or drunkards, but on the strong and mighty". He stressed that "the strong private owner will play a great political role in the reorganisation of the Russian Empire and in its reorganisation on solid monarchist principles".

The autocratic government began to reform village communities and old ways of farming by exploiting poor and middle peasants so as to strengthen the position of well-to-do peasants, enticing them on to the road of capitalist development, and retaining the landlord estates. The law of November 9, 1906, transferred communal lands to private owners; the setting up of farmsteads was encouraged. It was decided to promote the sale of some landlord estates to rich farmers and to transfer the redundant rural population to eastern parts of the country.

The question of the village community was one of the principal issues in Stolypin's reforms.

The stratification of the peasantry in conditions of advancing capitalism diminished the role of the village community. It prevented rich peasants from concentrating land in their hands and poor peasants from finding employment in factories, on the railways, etc. Village communities in regions with developed capitalism were disintegrating, and peasants began to regard them with disfavour. They quickly realised, however, the class character of Stolypin's legislation. They claimed that the new law was designed to mislead the peasants so that they would fight over their land and forget about landlord estates.

Stolypin hoped to covertly change conditions which might lead to a democratic revolution. His attempt, however, was a fiasco. In 1915 the peasants were practically forbidden to leave village communities due to "war-time circumstances". By January 1, 1916 some 2.5 million farming families had

left village communities; they owned 15.9 million hectares or 14 per cent of village land. Thus the tsarist government failed to set up kulaks and create a new social pillar for itself in the countryside. The process of class stratification of the peasantry—the rise of kulak elements and the ruin of poor peasants—was nevertheless intensified.

The relative size of the capitalist sector in agriculture was increased during the years of Stolypin's reforms. The role of the peasant bourgeoisie was particularly important. In the period from 1910 to 1913 it owned approximately half of all the draught animals, cows, land (allotted or purchased), and sown area. The landlords and the kulaks began to accumulate capital. They introduced modernised farm machinery on a wide scale. The first tractors were imported in 1913. All these changes for the better were made almost exclusively on capitalist-type farms. The mass of peasants were doomed to stagnation and ruin. Like their fathers before them, peasants used wooden ploughs and harrows; they threshed grain with flails, etc. More than half of them had no improved implements of any kind.

Different types of agricultural and credit co-operatives began to appear. However, the rich peasants played the principal role in the development of co-operatives because they provided surplus commodities. The co-operatives were mainly engaged in the marketing of farm products and extending credits to prosperous peasants. In 1906 there were only 39 agricultural co-operatives, as compared with 1,164 in 1913. In 1905 there were 1,680 credit co-operatives; in 1916—16,261. A considerable portion of the credits, however, was employed inefficiently. Most of the sum was used for the purchase of land or its lease, i.e., for paying huge rents to landlords instead of developing agricultural production; only a third was used to buy cattle, farm implements, seeds, etc.

In the 20th century Russia was quite swiftly turning into a major imperialist state. Banks and monopolies sprung up in different sectors of industry. Financial capital dominated the country's economy. Lenin wrote that Russia was characterised by "the contradiction which most profoundly of all explains the Russian revolution, namely, the most backward system of landownership and the most ignorant peasantry on

the one hand, and the most advanced industrial and finance capitalism on the other."¹

Two social wars were in progress in Russia—the struggle of the whole people against the tsarist autocracy, for freedom and democracy; and the struggle of the proletariat for socialism against the bourgeoisie and the exploitation of man by man.

WORLD WAR I

World War I sharply increased the hardships of the urban and rural population. It brought about a general economic crisis, cut-back in industry, particularly in the sectors which produced consumer goods for the domestic market, and derangement of transport and trade turnover. The war had a destructive effect on agriculture. Vast territories were ruined by military operations. Stocks of grain, cattle, implements and sown lands were destroyed; many people were killed or crippled.

On the eve of the war there were about 27 million peasants in the working-age group. In the first three years of the war nearly 15 million people were mobilised, mostly from the country. According to the agricultural census in 1917 the army conscripted 47.4 per cent of the able-bodied male population. In many cases conscription of the family's only bread-winner impoverished or ruined peasant families.

The peasantry were burdened with numerous compulsory duties, particularly labour conscription. Requisitions of cattle and horses were heavy blows to peasant families; the authorities sometimes took away even the last horse.

The stratification of the peasantry was accelerated by the war. Requisitions, military service and mobilisation ruined and degraded its lower groups. The number of landless, horseless or one-horse farmsteads was growing. Soaring prices helped to line the kulaks' pockets; they took advantage of the depression of the productive forces of the principal masses of peasants and engaged in profiteering.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 442.

In the early days of the war some peasants, particularly the rich ones, were infected with chauvinism and social-patriotism. However, there were many cases when peasants demonstrated against the war; during the mobilisation they clashed with the local authorities, police and troops. According to police archives, there were 787 peasant uprisings during the war. In 149 cases the tsarist authorities were compelled to send in police and troops to quell them.

Forced labour conscription for peasants in the outlying colonial territories triggered off a major revolt in Central Asia and Kazakhstan in 1916. The rioters destroyed conscription lists, smashed up police stations, and made short work of gendarmes. In some places national uprisings turned into an anti-feudal movement against the local gentry.

The government sent a 10,000-strong punitive force against the insurgents, but the uprising did not end until the February Revolution in 1917.

The decree of June 25, 1916, triggered off anti-war uprisings in Terek Region and Altai Territory.

The nation-wide dissatisfaction infected the army, which was made up mostly of peasants. Gradually the army was turning into a formidable revolutionary force. A general revolutionary crisis was brought about by the war.

THE PEASANTRY AND THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

The sanguinary autocracy of the Romanov dynasty was overthrown on February 27, 1917. Workers and soldiers arrested policemen and gendarmes; they flung open prisons and freed the revolutionaries. Soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies were set up in all the towns. The masses, however, succumbed to the wave of petty-bourgeois feelings and "honest defencism". At the outbreak of the revolution Lenin was abroad; many Bolsheviks¹ were in prison or exile;

¹ Bolsheviks—adherents of the majority wing of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party who were headed by Lenin. Later they set up their own independent party—the Communist Party.

scores of Bolshevik organisations were routed by the police. It is not surprising, therefore, that power in some workers' organisations was won by the Mensheviks¹ and Socialist-Revolutionaries² who had worked legally before the revolution. They succeeded in winning over the majority in the Soviets.

In the meantime, the bourgeois-landlord parties had set up the Provisional Government. Thus two governments came into being—the bourgeois Provisional Government, and the Soviets, the organs of power of workers and peasants.

The Provisional Government wanted to keep the land in the hands of landlords and the factories in the hands of capitalists; it wanted to safeguard the bourgeois-landlord system, to continue the war to a victorious end, and to crush the resistance of the people.

In the first months after the February Revolution the poor and middle peasants were under the influence of kulaks and the petty-bourgeois intellectuals which enticed them to reach an agreement with capitalists and landlords. The peasant movement, however, began to gain momentum during the first month of the revolution. There were 96 peasant actions in 1915, 283 in 1916, and 183 in March 1917 alone. The movement was from the very outset directed against the landlords; it was accompanied by the spontaneous looting of gentry estates.

The former village authorities—village headmen and volost departments—were ousted. Different organisations under different names took power in all localities. In terms of social character, these organisations can be divided into two major groups: organs of bourgeois-democratic power (village and volost executive councils, agrarian, food and other committees) and organs of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry which were later reorganised into organs of Soviet power for implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat (Soviets).

Village and volost peasant committees were usually elected by universal elections, but in the beginning most of the

¹ Mensheviks—the opportunist wing in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

² Socialist-Revolutionaries—a petty-bourgeois party which was mainly connected with villages.

deputies were rich peasants, village intellectuals, teachers, agronomists, and co-operative workers. Food committees were set up to bring into effect the bread monopoly which the Provisional Government declared on March 25. Agrarian committees began to appear in April. The Provisional Government wanted to turn them into its agencies in the countryside. However, they became organs of the revolutionary power of the peasants and played an outstanding role in the peasants' struggle against the landlords.

The devastation and hunger which resulted from the war required that as much land as possible be put to the plough, and so the agrarian committees began to seize land from the landlords, particularly that land which remained fallow due to the shortage of labour or economic ruin. The committees regulated the rent relations, deprived landlords of land which they leased and passed it on to poor and middle peasants.

In some places the committees confiscated landlord estates. Though the committees were influenced by the conciliatory petty-bourgeois intellectuals, the peasant masses compelled them to take radical steps.

On the questions of war and domestic policies the local committees took conciliatory positions and supported the Provisional Government. The peasant masses, however, compelled them to seize landlord estates, cattle, horses, implements, ploughland, etc., as a temporary measure (until the convention of the Constituent Assembly).

The Provisional Government declared war on the peasant movement. At first, however, the Provisional Government could do nothing about the peasant movement because it had no administrative machinery of its own in the different localities. Prior to July actual power was exercised by peasant committees or Soviets of workers' deputies in towns.

Between April and July the peasant movement mounted. It was now on a larger scale than during the revolution of 1905-1907. In 1905 there were 3,228 uprisings throughout Russia, as compared with 2,944 from March to July 1917 in the gubernias of European Russia alone.

The Soviets played an exceptionally important role in the peasant revolutionary movement; the peasants followed the workers' example in setting up their own Soviets. The first Soviet of peasants in 1917 was the Soviet of peasants' deputies

in the Petrograd garrison; it was elected by the soldiers who staged the February Revolution together with workers. This Soviet assigned its propagandists to villages, issued appeals and supplied peasants with literature. Petrograd workers made certain deductions from their pay to finance the Soviet. The sessions were attended by workers' delegates. Thus the Soviet had close ties with the proletariat.

Soon it became clear that the time was ripe for convening an all-Russia congress of Soviets of peasants' deputies. The initiative for preparing the congress was taken by Socialist-Revolutionaries who relied on co-operatives; the latter agreed to meet the costs of convening the congress and to finance the work of Socialist-Revolutionaries among the peasants. This is why the Socialist-Revolutionaries won a dominating position at the congress.

The first All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies was opened on May 4, 1917. The political reports were made by Socialist-Revolutionary leaders V. M. Chernov, A. F. Kersensky and others. They wanted to convince the peasants that it was necessary to support the Provisional Government, to form an alliance with the bourgeoisie, to bring the war to a victorious end, to stop disorders in the countryside, to stop uprisings against the landlords and to supply the army with bread. Such were the aims of the resolutions on the agrarian question, on war, on power, on the food situation, etc.

Lenin sent an open letter to the congress and then addressed one of its sessions. He explained the basic differences between the Bolsheviks, on the one hand, and the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, on the other. He called on the peasants to seize all land from the landlords, to stop paying all rents, but also not to damage property and implements and to do their best in increasing the production of grain and meat. He argued that there was a need for a close alliance between poor peasants and the rural and urban proletariat. He indicated that the war could be ended by the working masses and not by capitalists. Lenin said that all state power should be taken by the Soviets of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies.

In late July and early August the peasant movement began to subside because the period of dual power came to an end

and the bourgeoisie assumed dictatorial powers in early July; in addition the peasants were preoccupied with harvesting. The Provisional Government took advantage of the respite in the revolutionary movement and crushed the revolutionary organisations in the countryside; it instigated a terror campaign, arrested many leaders of peasant uprisings and began to return the estates to their former owners. The terror, however, brought unexpected results—peasants lost faith in the Provisional Government, and the revolution in the countryside began to grow in strength.

The Provisional Government's economic policy increased the economic chaos instead of alleviating it. A rise in fixed prices in August 1917 increased bread deliveries to towns. But it was a short-lived tendency because the prices for manufactured goods did not correspond to the prices for farm produce.

Poor peasants regarded fixed prices for bread as a mockery since some forty pounds of grain cost as much as one horse-shoe or a yard of cheap calico or half a pound of nails. Moreover all these items were very scarce. Soon peasants stopped bringing in grain. In the autumn of 1917 the grain purchases reminded one of military campaigns against the peasants; but they were all to no avail. On the other hand, the government was afraid to take grain by force from rich peasants and landlords. The latter, expecting a sharp rise in prices, began to conceal large stocks of grain. A rise in the so-called fixed prices encouraged profiteering.

In September and October purchases of grain began to decrease sharply; the supplies to the army were cut, and towns and villages in industrial gubernias were left breadless. Hunger was imminent; thousands of starving peasants stormed towns and demanded bread.

In that period, the peasants' movement acquired a new feature—the threat of hunger pushed into the background the question of land. In many gubernias the peasants waged the battle for bread against landlords and the food agencies of the Provisional Government. The peasant war was sparked off by the food crisis, dissatisfaction with the Provisional Government's agrarian policy, and the mounting protests against the war.

THE PEASANT WAR AGAINST THE LANDLORDS

There was growing resentment against the Provisional Government in the villages. The peasants said: "We are tired of waiting, we must take care of our own affairs." Having lost all hope of obtaining land by peaceful means, peasants began to loot and smash up landlord estates.

The bourgeois and landlord press printed wrathful reports about the peasant movement and accused peasants of senseless pogroms, looting and violence. There is no denying that the peasant movement at the time was spontaneous and disorganised. But in destroying the estates the peasants wanted to deprive landlords of their strongholds in the countryside. This is how they expressed their purpose: "Let's raze everything to the ground so that our exploiters and enemies have no place to return to, so that they have no abode, so that they be routed for good." It is not surprising that when power was assumed by the Soviets and the peasants became assured that the old times were gone forever, all destruction of estates came to an end.

In September and October the pogroms quickly spread through most of European Russia. Though there were many different forms of struggle, the most decisive and revolutionary was the seizure of states, land, harvests, stocks of food, draught animals, implements, ancillary works, etc. The peasantry began to liquidate landlordism and the remnants of serfdom.

The mass upsurge of the peasant movement quickly outgrew itself and turned into a peasant war. In October there were 1,210 uprisings, as compared with only 183 in March. The landlords abandoned their estates and fled in panic to towns where they flooded the Provisional Government and its local organs with telegrams demanding reprisals against the peasants. The merger of the peasant war and the workers' uprising was one of the essential prerequisites for the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

THE PEASANT MOVEMENT AND THE BOLSHEVIKS

From the very outset it was only the Bolshevik Party headed by Lenin that supported the revolutionary demands of the peasant masses and insisted that they be met. It was only the Bolshevik Party that called upon the working masses in the towns and country to spread the revolution, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and landlords, to establish dictatorship by the proletariat so as to abolish the system of exploitation of man by man and to build socialism. Lenin and the Communist Party explained that only the joint struggle of workers and peasants, only their alliance can destroy the exploiting regime, satisfy the essential requirements of the working people, save the country from hunger and economic ruin, and bring people peace and bread. The fate of the Russian revolution depended on this alliance.

The principal demand in the agrarian programme advanced by the Bolsheviks was the confiscation of all land—gentry, crown, government or church, i.e., all land in the hands of exploiters. The Party demanded "the immediate transfer of all lands to the peasantry organised in Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, or in other organs of local self-government elected in a really democratic way and entirely independent of the landowners and officials".¹

The agrarian programme presented by the Bolsheviks was more radical than those proposed by the other parties. The Cadets,² for instance, suggested the partial alienation of privately owned lands with the "reasonable" compensation price of about 6,000 million rubles. Taking into consideration that the expenses for carrying out the reform were to be wholly borne by the peasantry, the sum would have risen to 10,000 million rubles. This extortionate sum was ten times that fixed by the reform of 1861.

The agrarian reform advanced by the Mensheviks contained covert opportunities for the retention of kulak households. The Mensheviks resolutely opposed the nationalisation of all land, offering instead so-called municipalisation which

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 291.

² Cadets—members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party which represented the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia.

provided for the retention of private ownership of allotted strips.

The agrarian programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries proclaimed the need for the confiscation of all private land for public property, but in practice they were not too willing to implement the programme; they elaborated a whole system of measures for protecting the interests of the kulaks.

The Bolsheviks' policy on the agrarian problem quickly increased their influence in the country. Their popularity in the countryside was mounting as October approached. In September and October many local village Soviets adopted Bolshevik resolutions and replaced Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary organs by Bolshevik-controlled bodies.

By the autumn, a Left-wing faction emerged from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; the faction advocated the abolition of landlord ownership and the immediate transfer of land to the peasants.

On the eve of the October Revolution, when the ground was sinking under the feet of the Provisional Government, the Minister of Agriculture, S. L. Maslov, Socialist-Revolutionary, tried to deceive the peasants and prepared a draft decree on the transfer of landlord estates to peasant committees. But the decree was not implemented.

It was becoming clear that the Socialist-Revolutionaries had betrayed the interests of the peasants. This was clearly illustrated by their attitude towards the mandates from the peasants. The delegates to the First All-Russia Congress of Peasant Soviets brought 242 mandates from the electorate. The Executive Committee summarised them and printed them under the heading Peasant Mandate on the Land, which was permeated with the idea of the public ownership of land and its equal distribution among peasant farmsteads. Here are some of its basic provisions:

"(1) *Private ownership of land shall be abolished forever; land shall not be sold, purchased, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated.*

"*All land, whether state, crown, monastery, church, factory, entailed, private, public, peasant, etc., shall be confiscated without compensation and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the use of all those who cultivate it. . .*

"(2) *All mineral wealth—ore, oil, coal, salt, etc., and also*

all forests and waters of state importance, shall pass into the exclusive use of the state. All the small streams, lakes, woods, etc., shall pass into the use of the communes, to be administered by the local self-government bodies.

"(3) Lands on which *high-level scientific farming* is practised—orchards, plantations, seed plots, nurseries, hot-houses, etc.—*shall not be divided up, but shall be converted into model farms*, to be turned over for exclusive use to the state or to the communes, depending on the size and importance of such lands. . . .

"(4) Stud farms, government and private pedigree stock and poultry farms, etc., shall be confiscated and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on the size and importance of such farms. . . .

"(5) All livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid for this. . . .

"(6) The right to use the land shall be accorded to all citizens of the Russian state (without distinction of sex) desiring to cultivate it by their own labour, with the help of their families, or in partnership, but only as long as they are able to cultivate it. The employment of hired labour is not permitted. . . .

"(7) Land tenure shall be on an equality basis, i.e., the land shall be distributed among the working people in conformity with a labour standard or a subsistence standard, depending on local conditions. . . .

"(8) All land, when alienated, shall become part of the national land fund. . . .

"The land fund shall be subject to periodical redistribution, depending on the growth of population and the increase in the productivity and the scientific level of farming."¹

When the Mandate was printed, Lenin immediately published a special article in the *Rabochy*, a Bolshevik newspaper. He believed that the Mandate expressed the will of the great majority of class-conscious Russian peasants; he advocated its immediate implementation and pointed out that the only way to achieve this aim was via the alliance of the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 258-60.

peasants and the working class. "Trust the workers, comrade peasants," he appealed, "and break with the capitalists! Only in close alliance with the workers *can* you begin to carry out the programme set out in 242 mandates."¹

The Bolsheviks' influence in the countryside was growing.

Workers were seen more frequently at village meetings. The peasants sympathised with their revolutionary speeches.

"Down with the landlords! Land to the peasants!" were the slogans which workers and Bolsheviks propagated during the meetings in villages.

"It is easy to see that these people are on our side"; this was the impression that the peasants took away from such meetings.

II. PEASANTS AND THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

LENIN'S DECREE ON LAND

It was the second day of the new era in mankind's history. On October 25, 1917, the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies was convened late at night in Petrograd.

At nine in the evening of October 26 Lenin read out the Decree on Peace which was met with thunderous applause and shouts of joy. Hardly had the storm subsided, when Lenin made the report on the second item on the agenda: "The Abolition of Landed Proprietorship". The audience once again listened with rapt attention. Probably, it was the world's shortest draft of an agrarian law. The answer to the most burning question in Russian history was extremely short—the land shall be owned by those who cultivate it by their own labour!

In his report Lenin said that the Provisional Government, which reflected the interests of landlords and the bourgeoisie, had committed a crime when it refused to satisfy the peasants' demand for expropriating landlord estates and handing them

¹ Ibid., Vol. 25, p. 281.

over to the peasant masses. The government did all it could to drown in blood the peasant revolts and keep the landlord estates intact. "The first duty of the government of the workers' and peasants' revolution," he said, "must be to settle the land question, which can pacify and satisfy the vast masses of poor peasants."¹

One of the features of the October Revolution was that together with the fulfilment of socialist tasks proper it had to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution. All land was nationalised and the vestiges of serfdom abolished.

The Decree on Land completely expropriated landlord holdings and transferred land for rent-free use by working peasants. Private ownership of land was abolished. It was proclaimed the property of the whole people. Landlord, church, monastery, crown, entailed and other land together with mansions and farm buildings, draught animals and farm implements were transferred to volost land committees and district Soviets of peasants' deputies.

Damage to confiscated landlord property was declared a capital offence. District Soviets of peasants' deputies were instructed to ensure strict order during the confiscation of estates. The Decree incorporated the Peasants' Mandate on the Land, thus making it law.

The Mandate accorded equal rights to all citizens to cultivate land with the help of their families or in partnership. Hired labour was prohibited. Peasants could choose at will farmstead, communal or artel forms of land tenure, but at the same time land tenure was to be egalitarian. It meant that land was to be allocated on the most just principle from the peasant's point of view—according to the number of "mouths to feed" or according to the number of work-hands in the family.

The peasant idea of equal distribution of land was progressive in the struggle against the vestiges of feudalism, but it contained certain Utopian elements in its belief that equal land tenure could prevent the emergence of capitalist inequality, as well as destroy the landlord yoke.

Equal distribution of land did not save the poor peasant from ruin and poverty, nor did it stop the stratification in the village. Immediately after the October Revolution, Bolshe-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 257.

viks urged peasants to start collective cultivation of land in the most acceptable forms; they explained that "the way to escape the disadvantages of small-scale farming lies in communes, artels or peasant associations. That is the way to improve agriculture, economise forces and combat the kulaks, parasites and exploiters."¹

The land decree stated that all advanced farms were to be turned into model state enterprises; all stud and pedigree farms were to become the property of the whole people.

The principal aims of the land decree was to eliminate the remnants of serfdom, expropriate landlords and allocate land to the peasants. The age-long dream of peasants became a reality. The prominent American journalist, John Reed, who attended the Second Congress of Soviets, remarked that when the Decree on Land was adopted "the peasant delegates were in a frenzy of joy".

The next step was to enforce the decree and make it known even in the most remote places. The decree was immediately made public, and many emissaries and propagandists were commissioned far and wide to explain its essence. Most of them were veteran workers, sailors or soldiers who had passed through the school of revolutionary struggle and who had gained experience in political agitation.

The decree gave the peasants more than 150 million hectares of land which had formerly belonged to the exploiter classes. Peasants were released from the annual payment of more than 700 million rubles in gold and from the huge expenses for purchasing land; in addition their debt of 1,300 million rubles in gold to the Peasant Land Bank, which they had received as credits for purchasing land, was cancelled. In summing up the practical results of the revolution, Lenin wrote: "In this peasant country it was the peasantry as a whole who were the first to gain, who gained most, and gained immediately from the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the peasant for the first time has been working for himself and feeding better than the city dweller. For the first time the peasant has seen real freedom—freedom to eat his bread, freedom from starvation."²

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 175.

² Ibid., Vol. 30, p. 112.

The land decree was received with a profound sense of satisfaction.

Numerous letters from peasants to the Soviet Government and to Lenin illustrate the attitude of the broad peasant masses towards the Soviet government, the Communist Party and its policy. This is what peasants from the village of Melovoye, Kursk Gubernia, wrote to Lenin: "We can see that you really stand for the liberation of poor peasants. It is the Bolshevik Party which is fighting for socialism. Before we did not know who the Bolsheviks were, but now that we do, we see that we, the peasants, are all Bolsheviks."

Peasants from the village of Barskaun, Turkestan, wrote: "We, the poor Kirghizians and landless labourers, 140 people in all, from the village of Barskaun, unanimously greet the Communist Party and Soviet power. We promise that we all will rise against our oppressors and all vicious elements who come out against Soviet power; we shall be ready at any moment to rise in defence of the interests of the working people."

There were hundreds of similar letters. Every day delegates from the peasants arrived to see Lenin. Upon returning to their villages, they told the peasants what Lenin had said and what he advised them to do.

Because of the tremendous number of delegates Lenin wrote a "Reply to Questions from Peasants" which was typed out, addressed (with his personal signature) to the gubernia in question, and handed over to the peasant delegates.

In the "Reply" Lenin wrote:

"The Council of People's Commissars calls upon the peasants to take all power into their own hands in their respective localities. The workers give their full, undivided, all-round support to the peasants. . . ."¹

Lenin explained that the Soviets were plenipotentiary organs of state in localities, that "the volost land committees must at once take over the administration of all landed estates, instituting the strictest accounting" that "all rulings of the volost land committees issued with the approval of the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies have the force of law and must be carried out unconditionally and without delay"².

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 300.

² Ibid., p. 299.

VILLAGE SOVIETS

Soviets began to appear in rural areas immediately after the October Revolution. These organs of proletarian state power replaced the old, bourgeois and landlord organs of power which had so oppressed the working peasants. The aim of the Soviets was to create a community free from the exploitation of man by man.

They were established somewhat later than in towns. By the end of October 1917 Soviets functioned in only 422 districts out of the total of 813 in Russia. By the beginning of 1918 Soviets had been set up in 263 districts out of 310 in the 30 central gubernias. In November 1917 Lenin noted that the process was very slow: "... the peasants refuse to believe that all power belongs to the Soviets, they are still expecting something else from the government and forget that the Soviet is not a private but a state institution."¹

Most of the volost Soviets were organised between January and March 1918. As a rule, they were elected by the whole population, so the kulaks and other bourgeois elements used the situation to penetrate into the Soviets.

Bolsheviks, workers and demobilised soldiers helped the toiling peasants to conduct the elections to the Soviets and free them from people hostile to Soviet power. Peasants knew from their own experience that the realisation of the advantages engendered by the October Revolution depended on the composition of Soviets. Thanks to their great work in the countryside, Bolsheviks succeeded in winning over the peasant masses and the lower Soviets.

FIRST AGRARIAN REFORMS

The Council of People's Commissars assigned the implementation of the land decree to the land committees which were set up in 1917. The general supervision was assigned

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 293-94.

to the People's Commissariat for Agriculture. It was a tremendous job: millions of hectares of land and thousands of estates were to be nationalised and then distributed.

The decree was supplemented by the Fundamental Law on the Socialisation of Land which was adopted on January 27, 1918. The law confirmed the abolition of private ownership of land, its confiscation and transfer to the toiling peasantry. The law also reiterated that land could be used only by those who cultivated it with their own hands. There could be no discrimination on land tenure on the grounds of sex, religious beliefs, nationality or citizenship.

The law was drafted by Left-wing Socialist-Revolutionaries who were then members of the Soviet government, but before it was approved by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee Lenin insisted on the inclusion of the clause which stated that the Russian Federation "in order to achieve socialism as soon as possible shall render every kind of assistance (cultural or material) for the collective cultivation of land, giving preference to labour communist, artel and co-operative farms before private farms".

The law, like the decree, established the principle of the egalitarian distribution of land according to the number of consumers and labour put in. It reflected a definite stage in the country's development which could not be by-passed without harming the alliance of the working class and the peasantry. The egalitarian distribution was carried out under the dictatorship of the proletariat and it, therefore, performed a certain role in restricting kulak holdings. When it was submitted for approval by the Third Congress of Soviets, Bolsheviks had in addition introduced certain amendments which gave the state the monopoly over trade in seeds and farm machinery, and over foreign and domestic trade in grain. Finally, the law made provision for measures ensuring advantages for collective farming.

The first agrarian reforms changed the nature of relations in the countryside; the plots of land of all peasant households, particularly of large-family households, were enlarged. Nearly three million landless peasants received land.

According to very approximate data by November 21, 1918, the peasants had received some 16,420,000 hectares and by December 1919 nearly 20 million hectares of the

aggregate of about 24,260,000 hectares of farm land in the 32 gubernias of the Russian Federation which formerly belonged to big landowners.

It was pointed out in the report of the People's Commissariat for Agriculture to the Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets (December 23-28, 1921) that "86 per cent of the total exploiters' land fund passed into the hands of peasants, 11 per cent were appropriated by the state (mostly for setting up state farms) and less than 3 per cent were given over to peasant associations. An average of 97 per cent of land in 32 gubernias belongs to peasants, and only 3 per cent to state farms, communes, artels, etc."

In different parts of the country land was distributed in a different manner among the peasant households. Usually, the consumer unit was taken as the distribution norm, but in some cases the norms were based on the number of work-hands, etc. An investigation of 1,103 villages revealed that 88 per cent of them had used the consumer unit, 10 per cent—the sex (masculine) unit, and only 2 per cent—the work-hand unit. In many places there was no distribution at all in the beginning, only the landless peasants or peasants with insufficient land being given additional plots.

The consumer unit was most advantageous for poor and middle peasants; it gave them more land. The kulak households usually lost purchased or leased lands, and surplus allotments. Since the kulaks had leased or purchased the best land, it was the poor peasants that stood to gain from the expropriation. In certain places, however, the norms favoured prosperous peasants.

As a rule, land was distributed only for the spring or winter sowing in 1918.

The Fundamental Law on the Socialisation of Land did not and could not fix standard norms for land allotment to peasants. It pointed out that the size of plots could not exceed the consumer-labour norm which was set to ensure the sustenance of the peasant family and provide it with work. The instruction which supplemented the law said that each district should establish its own average norm to be used as the consumer-labour norm. So there were great fluctuations.

The egalitarian distribution of land solved the problem of allotting privately owned land to peasants. The equality was ensured only within villages and seldom within volosts; frequently, it was illusionary because it was impossible to equalise the ownership of draught animals and farm implements. Neither could the egalitarian distribution wipe out the strip-field and distant-field systems. In some cases it made things worse.

The agrarian reforms undertaken by Soviet power affected the peasantry's class structure. The middle peasants constituted the majority. In the period from 1917 to 1919 the number of horseless households dropped from 28.7 to 25.1 per cent in 25 Russian gubernias, while the number of one-horse households went up from 47.6 to 60.1 per cent. The number of households with three and more horses dropped from 5.1 to 2.5 per cent.

The victory of the October Revolution ushered in agrarian reforms in the former semi-colonial outlying territories of tsarist Russia. However, the reforms in Central Asia and Kazakhstan needed a lengthy preparatory period. Special measures were needed to free the local peasants from the economic and ideological yoke of their own exploiters. The first agrarian reforms (made during the Civil War which ended there late in 1923), which were aimed at solving the nationalities problem, swept away the remnants of the colonial past.

Proceeding from Lenin's Decree on Land, on December 3, 1917 the Council of People's Commissars of the Turkestan Republic prohibited all purchasing or sale of land; that stopped the process of dispossession. Land could be leased in exceptional cases provided that prior approval had been given by the organs of Soviet power for a period not exceeding one year. As a result of the first agrarian reforms, the republic nationalised all land which had been seized by colonialists, primarily by the tsar's family, and all land which belonged to the local feudal lords who had merged with the colonialist elements. According to rough estimates, the peasants received nearly 100,000 hectares of exploiters' land.

An important step was the nationalisation of the cotton industry and of all stocks of cotton, as well as the introduc-

tion of a state monopoly on cotton. A special decree deprived the local landlords and kulaks of the right to control the use of irrigation water. Soviet power annulled all peasant debts to the feudal lords and the bourgeois and landlord administration. In 1903 these debts had amounted to 16 million gold rubles, and in 1911, to 30 million.

Land-and-water committees were set up in all regions and districts of the Turkestan Republic so as to implement the Soviet agrarian policy. Their task was to distribute the land among the toiling peasants and provide poor peasants with seed and farm implements. The committees began to confiscate land and hand them over to the peasants; they imposed taxes on landlords.

The agrarian reforms which the Soviet government started in Central Asia during its first years of power were of great political significance. They improved the positions of poor peasants, delivered a blow to landlords and kulaks, and consolidated the alliance of the Russian working class with the peasantry of the former colonial outlying territories.

The shortage of farm implements and animals was acute. In 1917 28.7 peasant households had no horses, and 34 per cent no implements.

The Soviet government took steps to provide peasants with seed and farm implements. Many farmers had no money to buy implements for cultivating the land which they had received from the state. The problem presented great difficulties in the growing economic chaos and the Civil War. However, even in April 1918 the Soviet government was able to allocate 50 million rubles for credits to peasants for buying seed. Another 300 million rubles were allocated at the end of the year. This assistance considerably eased the peasants' position. All in all in the first two years of its existence the Soviet government supplied the peasants with implements to the sum of more than 3,000 million rubles at fixed prices.

The road to a better life was opened before the toiling peasants, but only a radical reorganisation of agriculture on socialist principles could save them from poverty and kulak exploitation.

THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE KULAK. FOOD DETACHMENTS

The revolution in the countryside did not end with the expropriation of landlord estates or the egalitarian distribution of land. The first stage of the agrarian revolution, when pressing tasks for eradicating the vestiges of serfdom came to the fore, was followed by a ruthless class struggle amongst the peasants themselves when the village poor, backed by urban workers, undertook the great offensive against the kulaks and the village bourgeoisie.

In explaining the essence of the revolution in the countryside and the correlation of the bourgeois-democratic and socialist tasks it was accomplishing, Lenin distinguished two stages—prior to and after the summer of 1918. "We," he wrote, "carried the *bourgeois* revolution to its conclusion. The peasants supported us as a whole. . . . The Soviets united the peasants in general. The class divisions among the peasants had not yet matured, had not yet come into the open.

"That process took place in the summer and autumn of 1918. . . . A wave of kulak revolts swept over Russia. The poor peasants learned, not from books or newspapers, but from life itself, that their interests were irreconcilably antagonistic to those of the kulaks, the rich, the rural bourgeoisie."¹

On the eve of the October Revolution there were more than two million kulak households. Since the kulaks constituted the most numerous of the exploiter classes which survived the victory of the October Revolution, they tried their best to seize land and continue to exploit the poor peasantry. In many places they managed with the support of Socialist-Revolutionary elements to infiltrate peasant Soviets and obstruct their work. For instance, they incited other kulaks to loot confiscated cattle and farm implements. In their struggle against the Soviet government, the kulaks refused to deliver grain to the state at fixed prices, hoping in this way to cause hunger in the country.

Because of kulak sabotage purchases of grain were dras-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 301.

tically falling. In January 1918, only 7.1 per cent of the purchase plan for Moscow and Petrograd was fulfilled; in February the figure was 16 per cent; in April 6.1 per cent, and in May 5.7 per cent. Workers, who had no food, left the industrial centres for the countryside. Many enterprises were closed down.

The grain problem was one of the most serious which the Soviet government had to face. The future of the proletarian state depended on its solution. In the spring of 1918 the workers of Moscow and Petrograd sometimes received only 50 grams of bread with oilcake additives as a ration for two days.

The Soviet government promulgated a series of decrees against the village bourgeoisie who concealed grain or used it for speculation. The monopoly on bread was proclaimed and fixed prices were established. On May 9, 1918, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee adopted the decree to give extraordinary powers to the People's Commissariat for Food in the struggle against the village bourgeoisie who concealed grain or used it for speculative purposes. The decree underlined the need for a food dictatorship in the country and for a resolute struggle against the kulaks. Purchases of foodstuffs and their distribution were centralised.

Five days earlier, Lenin had published the letter "On the Famine" to Petrograd workers in which he appealed to them to organise a mass "crusade" against grain speculators, kulaks, disorganisers and bribe-takers. He wrote: "The famine is not due to the fact that there is no grain in Russia, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against Soviet power, on this most important and acute of issues, the issue of bread."¹

Food detachments recruited among urban workers played a major role in bridling the kulaks and implementing the agrarian policy of the Soviet government. They were dispatched to villages where they helped the poor confiscate grain from the kulaks and send it to the starving people in industrial centres.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 391.

In essence, the food detachments were instruments of the Soviet food administration. They were made up of the most politically conscious workers elected by their comrades.

These detachments searched for surplus grain concealed by kulaks and confiscated it, they persecuted speculators and the so-called *meshochniki* (men who moved food in sacks and dodged the detachments who tried to stop them). The workers explained to peasants the policy of the Bolsheviks, arranged political and educational work, and persuaded peasants to hand over surplus grain. A portion of the grain confiscated from the kulaks was turned over to the poor peasants. Lenin characterised the role of the food detachments in the following way: "When I read a report to the effect that in Usman Uyezd [district], Tambov Gubernia, a food detachment turned over to the poor peasants 3,000 of the 6,000 poods [1 pood—approx. 16 kg] of grain it had requisitioned, I declare that even if you were to prove to me that to this day there has been only one such detachment in Russia, I should still say that the Soviet government is doing its job. For in no other country in the world will you find such a detachment!"¹

As of February 15, 1919 there were more than 1,300 such detachments. Together with grain requisition they conducted propaganda work, set up village Party cells and Poor Peasants' Committees. In just two months, December 1918 and January 1919, they arranged 1,653 talks in 16 gubernias on the government's agrarian policy, 1,082 rallies, more than 1,500 reports and lectures on various subjects, more than 500 dramatic performances and 447 concerts. During the same period they organised 111 village Party cells and opened nearly 150 libraries and propaganda stations.

POOR PEASANTS' COMMITTEES

In the face of the kulak opposition to the Soviet government's agrarian policy, the most advanced and politically educated peasants launched a decisive struggle against the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 453.

village exploiters; at this time there appeared the first organisations of poor peasants, later incorporated in the Poor Peasants' Committees. They were usually headed by demobilised soldiers who had helped to confiscate land from landlords and kulaks. The Soviet government was aware that it was impossible to save the country from imminent hunger without routing the counter-revolutionary kulaks, and so on June 11, 1918, it promulgated the decree on organising the poor peasants and supplying them with grain, essential goods and farm implements.

The committees did a great job in confiscating surplus grain from kulaks and in supplying the Red Army. They were prominent in consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and handing over to peasants land which the kulaks had seized during the confiscation of landlord estates. The committees contributed to the genuine equalisation of land tenure; as a result of this the kulaks were deprived of more than 50 million hectares of land which passed over to the poorest peasants. It is estimated that by November 1918 more than 122,000 committees of the poor had been set up in 33 gubernias of the Russian Federation.

In the first years of Soviet power, Lenin frequently pointed to the need for a ruthless struggle against the kulaks who sabotaged the measures taken by the Soviet government, exploited the labour of others and speculated with grain. However, he had not yet brought up the question of the full expropriation of kulaks or the confiscation of their property. On November 8, 1918, addressing the delegations from the Poor Peasants' Committees in central gubernias, he said: "We can work together with the middle peasants, and with them fight the kulaks. . . ."

"We tell the kulaks: We have nothing against you either, but hand over your surplus grain, don't profiteer and don't exploit the labour of others. Until you do so we shall hit you with everything we've got."¹

In his report to the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party in 1919 about work conducted in the countryside, Lenin said: "...in respect of the rich peasants we do not say as resolutely as we do of the bourgeoisie—absolute expropriation

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, pp. 177-78.

of the rich peasants and the kulaks. This distinction is made in our programme. We say that the resistance of the counter-revolutionary efforts of the rich peasants must be suppressed. That is not complete expropriation."¹

The poorest peasants supported the food policy conducted by the Soviet government for supplying the working class and the toiling peasants with grain and other foodstuffs.

The Poor Peasants' Committees dealt a heavy economic and political blow to the kulaks. Land was taken away from kulaks and given over to peasants with little or no land. The committees confiscated cattle and farm implements from kulaks and distributed them among the poor. They played a major role in stopping the kulaks from profiteering with grain.

In October 1918 the all-Russia Central Executive Committee decreed a 10,000-million-ruble single tax. It helped to undermine the economic might of kulak households. The Poor Peasants' Committees and local Soviets were instructed to distribute the tax in such a manner as to "completely exempt the urban and village poor from the extraordinary single tax, deduct insignificant taxes from the middle segments, and place the brunt of the tax burden on the rich urban population and rich peasants". In accordance with the decisions of the committees of the poor, kulaks were subjected to other taxes. The sums collected were used to build flour-mills, and cultural and educational establishments, and to purchase equipment for workshops.

Having fulfilled their missions, the committees were at the end of 1918 merged with volost and village Soviets. They had done much in consolidating local Soviets and purging kulak elements. The purging was intensified during the pre-election campaign and the merger with the Soviets.

The Sixth Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets in November 1918 adopted the resolution on merging the Poor Peasants' Committees and the Soviets. This strengthened the Soviets and gave them a greater role in the implementation of the agrarian policies. The merger was completed at the beginning of 1919. The creation of single

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 205.

organs of proletarian state power was tremendously important for the consolidation of the alliance between the working class and the toiling peasants.

Lenin had predicted that at different stages of the revolution the working class would have different segments of the peasantry as its allies. During the bourgeois-democratic revolution the whole peasantry could be an ally of the proletariat because it was interested in the overthrow of tsarist autocracy and in the eradication of the vestiges of feudalism and serfdom. During the socialist revolution, the proletariat's ally would be the poor peasantry which was interested in the proletariat's victory over the bourgeoisie and the capitalist elements in the countryside. These were two principles which the Bolsheviks based on the correlation of class forces; they determined the Party's strategic line during the transition from one stage of the revolution to another.

The committees made a great contribution to the implementation of the Party's third principle which Lenin formulated in November 1918: "The task at the present moment is to come to an agreement with the middle peasant—while not for a moment renouncing the struggle against the kulak and at the same time firmly relying solely on the poor peasant."¹ In March 1919 the principle was adopted by the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party as the basis for its policy. It reflected the new conditions in the countryside where the middle peasant, who had become the principal figure there, firmly sided with the Soviet government. The alliance with the middle peasant was imperative for intensifying the struggle against foreign intervention and the whiteguards and also for accomplishing the task of building socialism.

By its selfless struggle in the interests of the working people the working class had ensured that the broad masses of the peasantry recognised its leading role. The Bolsheviks' authority in the countryside was growing. The most able and politically most advanced peasants joined the ranks of the Communist Party. Prior to 1917 there were only four Party cells in the countryside, in 1917 there were 203, and

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 191.

in 1918—2,304. Only 494 peasants joined the Communist Party before 1917; in 1917 membership had been granted to 4,122; in 1918 to 14,792, and in 1919 to 26,655 peasants. By the end of 1919 there were nearly 5,000 Party cells in the countryside with more than 46,000 registered members.

Thanks to the agrarian policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet government between 1917 and 1919, the kulaks were bridled and the poor peasants were saved from their exploitation. As long as small private farmsteads prevailed in the villages, the Communist Party, relying on the support of poor peasants, allied itself with the middle peasants against the kulaks. The Party's agrarian policy consolidated the dictatorship of the proletariat and the inviolable union of the working class and the toiling peasantry. The revolutionary reforms, Lenin said, "created an agrarian system which is the *most flexible* from the point of view of the transition to socialism".¹

NEW OFFSHOOTS (BEGINNING OF COLLECTIVISATION AND STATE FARMING)

The first associations for collective cultivation of land appeared soon after the October Revolution.

On August 29, 1918, there were 611 registered agricultural collectives; by the end of the same year there were 1,579. The number of collectives increased particularly rapidly whilst the committees of the poor were active.

How did the communes appear? This question is best answered by members of the communes themselves. In a letter to the newspaper *Golos Trudovogo Krest'yanstva* (December 8, 1918), a commune member from Smolensk Gubernia wrote:

"It took me a long time to understand what the commune was and what advantages it offered. Now I know from

personal experience, and I hope that if I share my thoughts with others, it will help them to understand life in communes.

"We all live in villages, we all know what the strip-field system is. Supposing, my broadest strip is 25 feet and yours is 15 feet. I have sown mine, you haven't. My strip is sprouting, but you have just started to sow. Since your strip is narrow, your harrow is sure to cut down my plants at the turning-points. Why is this so? Simply because we didn't reach an agreement, because we didn't organise ourselves.

Here is another example.

"There are two brothers. Each is farming on his own; each threshes grain for himself, but their threshing-floor is common property. Once the threshing is done, one of them takes the flail, the spade, the broom, and the rake back to his farmstead; the other has no such implements, and so he has to borrow them from the neighbours.

"Why is this so? The reason is the same: we are not organised, we are weak, we think only about ourselves.

"Is there any way out?"

"Yes, we must organise ourselves and agree to destroy all strips, to cultivate the land collectively, to purchase farm implements for common use from our common funds.

"In this way land will not be wasted, we shall all have implements, and the benefit from collective work will be greater. All will be workers, all will be owners, all will be brothers and friends. This is precisely what the commune is!"

And this is what a peasant from Tver Gubernia said:

"We have realised that we, poor peasants and toilers, cannot improve our miserly lot or save ourselves from kulak exploitation single-handed; we also know that our socialist people's government cannot help us as individuals. Our salvation and the well-being of the whole toiling people lies in agricultural association and the transition to the collective cultivation of land."

There were many prerequisites for the formation of communes—the desire for an ideal structure of society, purely economic interests, and the wish to insure against hunger, ruin and the kulak yoke.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 314.

The following table shows how the number of agricultural collectives increased in 1919 and 1920.

Year	Number of agricultural collectives	Number of peasant households in agricultural collectives	Area of agricultural collectives (in thousands of ha)
1918	1,579	16,400	202
1919	6,188	81,300	925
1920	10,600	131,000	1,777

Though the number of agricultural collectives was increasing, their percentage in the total number of peasant households and in the total sown area was low. The material base was as yet inadequate for collectivisation and, more important, the private-ownership psychology of peasants could not be changed in such a short time. The collectives were like tiny islands in a sea of private households, but they succeeded in accumulating valuable experience.

In December 1918, the First All-Russia Congress of land departments, poor peasants' committees and communes generalised the results of agricultural collectives and mapped out the road for improving their work. Lenin's speech to the congress was an event of particular importance. He outlined the programme for transferring peasant households to the collective cultivation of land. This is what he said: "Our common task and our common aim is the transition to socialist farming, to collective land tenure and collective farming."¹ Explaining the advantages inherent in collective land tenure, Lenin emphasised that "the productivity of labour would be doubled or trebled, there would be a double or triple saving of human labour in agriculture and human activity in general if a transition were made from this scattered small-scale farming to collective farming".²

While assisting peasants to go over to collective farming, the Communist Party and the Soviet government took steps to prevent coercion by local authorities.

A tremendous role in the socialist transformations in the countryside was played by the Communist Party's Eighth

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 346.

² *Ibid.*, p. 343.

Congress. The congress approved the law on the system of land tenure and measures for the transition to socialist agriculture which had been earlier adopted by Soviet power. At the same time Lenin censured administrative and coercive methods of setting up communes in certain localities, as did the resolution adopted by the congress. Such methods were, of course, resented by the peasants.

"Here coercion would ruin the whole cause," Lenin said, addressing the congress. "Prolonged educational work is required."¹ The resolution adopted by the congress endorsed the principle of voluntary collectivisation: "Only those associations are valuable which have been set up by the peasants themselves on their voluntary initiative and the advantages of which were tried out by them in practice. Excessive hastiness . . . is harmful because it only increases the bias of middle peasants against novelties.

"The representatives of Soviet power who directly or even indirectly resort to coercion so as to force peasants into communes must be called to account and relieved of their work in the village."

Though the Soviet state was acutely short of funds, it came to the assistance of the new collective farms. On July 3, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars allocated 10 million rubles; another 50 million rubles were allocated on August 3 of the same year. On November 2, 1918, on Lenin's initiative, the government promulgated a decree on the formation of a special fund for measures for developing agriculture. One thousand million rubles was allocated to assist the emerging collectives. This sum was distributed among agricultural communes and associations or groups for the joint cultivation of land "provided that they pass from individual to collective cultivation of land and harvesting". The credits were to be repaid in kind without interest.

In the first years of Soviet power there were three major forms of collective farms—communes, artels and associations for the joint cultivation of land. The communes and artels were the most numerous, though the ratio was different in different years. Communes predominated in 1918 and the first half of 1919, but later on they gave way to artels.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 211.

The first collective farms incorporated the poorest peasants, industrial workers, some intellectuals and middle farmers. Representatives of the former exploiter classes were not permitted membership.

Collective farms were emerging and spreading in a ruthless class struggle. Class enemies bitterly resented these offshoots of socialism in the countryside. They tried to inflict damage on collective farms in every possible way—by armed assaults, arson, pillage and by assassinating the commune members.

In the spring of 1918 the peasants in Bugulma district, Samara Gubernia, founded an artel of 20 families. They contributed all they had to the public fund; the district Soviet allocated 200 hectares of land and the necessary implements. The members of the artel successfully completed the spring sowing and began to organise their collective economy. Soon, however, their work was interrupted. On July 6 a detachment of whiteguards attacked the artel and, assisted by the local kulaks, began to beat up the peasants and ransack their property. They took away all the commune's cattle—27 horses, eight cows, nine pigs, and all property, including bedding; they destroyed all the buildings and sown crops. Nine Communists were shot. Those who survived the pogrom went back to their villages; the artel ceased to exist.

Fearing sudden attacks by the whiteguards and kulaks, many commune members went to work in the fields with rifles slung over their shoulders.

However, in spite of the difficulties of the war the peasants in collectives lived better than when they had been farming on their own.

All surplus products which came under the rationing system had to be delivered to food agencies. According to the available data, in 1919 collectives delivered more than 6.4 million tons of various farm products to the state. That is, of course, a modest figure; the output of the first collective farms could not play any significant role in the country's food supply.

From December 3 to December 10, 1919, the First All-Russia Congress of agricultural communes and artels was convened in Moscow. The congress summed up the results of the two years' work and mapped out plans for further development. Much attention was given to propagation of the ideas

of collectivisation so that collective associations could show for all the peasants the advantages of joint cultivation and collective labour. The congress was addressed by Lenin who said: "The communes must develop in such a way that peasant farming conditions will begin to change by contact with them and by the economic help they give, so that every commune, artel, and co-operative will be able to make the beginnings of an improvement in these conditions and put them into effect, thereby proving to the peasants in practice that this change can be only of benefit to them."¹

In the beginning many communes and artels were of consumer type; they produced little for commercial purposes. But in the first years of Soviet power they were also important in that the poorest peasants who were amalgamated in such associations saved themselves and their families from starvation, ruin and the kulak yoke.

Many agricultural collectives organised cultural and educational work among the population. They helped to open schools and libraries, arranged courses and circles for illiterates, and distributed literature.

Alongside the collective farms there appeared big state farms. They were an essential prerequisite for the socialist reorganisation of agriculture. By the end of 1920 there were 3,988 state farms with a total area of 2,868,000 hectares confiscated from the landlords.

The socialist reforms implemented by the Soviet state in the countryside had no precedent in history; so the difficulties were enormous. The state and collective farms needed time to work out the most expedient forms of production; they needed time to gain momentum and prove in practice that they were superior to small peasant economies.

The peasant masses had just received land and they were of course eager to realise their age-long dream of farming on their own land without feudal landlords, on land which had been equally distributed among those who tilled it. The working class and the Communist Party, therefore, boldly consented to their wish and helped them realise their demands, aspirations and ideas. Thus the primary condition for the victory of the proletarian revolution—the alliance of

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 201.

the working class and the peasantry—was set. The Paris Commune of 1871 and the Hungarian proletarian revolution of 1919 were defeated in the final analysis precisely because the working class was all alone, because it failed to win the support of the peasants. The working class of the USSR solved this problem. It won the whole-hearted support of the broad masses of peasants, and thus turned the proletarian revolution into the revolution of the whole people. That was the decisive prerequisite for the victory of the October Revolution.

However, the working class and the Communist Party did not content themselves with the realisation of the petty-bourgeois dreams of the peasantry. The revolution cleared the way to socialism for the whole country, including the peasantry. Among the principal prerequisites for socialism were the dictatorship of the proletariat, socialisation of industry and nationalisation of land. At the same time the Communist Party and the Soviet government showed the peasants how they could arrive at socialism. Under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet government the most forward-looking peasants began to set up state farms and collective farms—mankind's first socialist agricultural enterprises.

III. PEASANTS DEFEND THE REVOLUTION

THE INTERVENTION AND CIVIL WAR

In the spring of 1918 British, French, American and Japanese troops intruded into Soviet Russia. They landed at Arkhangelsk, Murmansk and Vladivostok. The imperialists of the USA, France, Britain and other countries refused to recognise the Soviet government in Russia, and they decided to strangle the young republic. Simultaneously the internal counter-revolution raised its head. It was headed by tsarist Admiral Kolchak in Siberia, generals Denikin and

Krasnov in the south, and Dutov in the Urals. The imperialists incited the revolt of the Czechoslovak corps which was sent to France via Siberia and the Far East. A wave of kulak uprisings followed.

It was the beginning of immeasurable hardships which the workers and peasants of the world's first socialist state met with unparalleled heroism.

In the autumn of 1918 Soviet Russia was faced with fronts in all sides. The imperialists and the whiteguards occupied nearly three-quarters of the country's territory—only 25 gubernias of the total of 75 (without Poland and Finland which proclaimed independence) were left in the hands of the Soviet government by November 1918. The Red Army waged battles on five fronts.

The whiteguards and the foreign troops brought war, death and devastation. They made short work of Communists, government officials, workers and peasants; they restored the old tsarist order and returned factories and land to their former owners—capitalists and landlords.

The landlords followed in the footsteps of the advancing troops. They immediately began to "set things aright"—took the land away from the peasants and reinstated police officers and governors for protection. Then followed mass persecutions; the owners got back everything that the peasants had taken away from the estates and in addition they requisitioned foodstuffs in compensation for the "losses" incurred by them during the revolution.

The peasants had to supply the whiteguard army. Grain was sent abroad in exchange for armaments. In July 1919 Denikin, for instance, sent about 3,840 tons of wheat to the USA in exchange for armoured cars; 3,200,000 tons of Kuban wheat were sent to Britain in payment for winter clothing, and 3,200,000 tons were ready for export. Special "legitimate" delivery quotas were imposed on peasants, not to mention countless extortions and outright robbery. The whiteguards were never short of marauders.

When Kolchak's bandits retreated, they destroyed everything that they could not take with them. They set fire to the stacks of grain in the fields; a 500-kilometre strip of scorched and blackened land stretched from Chelyabinsk to Petropavlovsk.

In three gubernias of Siberia alone—Altai, Yenisei and Irkutsk—the whiteguards and the interventionists destroyed 56,000 peasant houses and 20,000 farm buildings, requisitioned more than 40,000 head of cattle, nearly 9,600 tons of foodstuffs and more than 25,600 tons of hay.

The Victims of Intervention Relief Society, which functioned in the 1920s, estimated that nearly 82 per cent of the total losses of property was sustained by the rural population. In terms of cost the total losses amounted to more than 558 million rubles, of which 385 million rubles (68 per cent) were borne by the rural population.

"WE NOW KNOW WITH WHOM TO SIDE"

At the beginning of the Civil War many middle peasants held to a wait-and-see position, refraining from active assistance to the Soviet government. At the same time they were extremely reluctant to fight for Kolchak or Denikin who soon revealed themselves as rabid champions of landlords and capitalists. The most widespread forms of resistance to the whiteguard regime were evasion of conscription and desertion. Peasants hid themselves in the forests, and very often they ran off from the recruiting posts.

In 1919 Denikin relied on punitive squads to mobilise the peasants. Those who were caught were sent under heavy guard to reserve units, but the recruits seized the first opportunity and took to their heels. So it was a risky matter to give them weapons.

It was a real paradox: the more territory the whiteguards occupied, the nearer drew their downfall. Their armies were only formidable as long as their bulk was made up of officers, but as soon as they were replenished by peasants these armies, though numerically stronger, lost all their impetus.

The attitude towards the Soviet government in villages through which the whiteguards had passed underwent a radical change.

Lenin wrote that the peasant "from being neutrally hostile ... has become neutrally sympathetic. He prefers us to

any other form of government because he sees that the workers', the proletarian state, the proletarian dictatorship, does not mean brute force or usurpation, as it has been described, but is a better defender of the peasants than Kolchak, Denikin, and the rest are."¹

A wave of indignation against white governments also swept over the prosperous peasants. Deserters from the enemy said that even the kulaks were dissatisfied. Quite a number of prosperous peasants joined partisan detachments. Lenin time and again indicated that even the kulaks took part in the armed struggle against Kolchak: "...we are witnessing a revolt in Siberia in which not only workers and peasants but even intellectuals and kulaks are taking part. We see the complete collapse of Kolchak's movement."²

Only the kulak and well-to-do elements who opposed the Soviet government and yearned for the restoration of the bourgeois order welcomed the White dictatorship. The kulaks managed to incite some middle peasants who longed for free trade and who refused to bear the hardships of the revolution. These peasants watched passively the downfall of Soviet power on the territories occupied by the whiteguards, but soon their indifference gave way to an outright hostile attitude towards the White regimes. The wealthy peasants were also disappointed; all peasants realised that they could expect no good to come from the Whites.

The inhumanity of the whiteguards claimed victims not only amongst the toiling masses but also the intellectuals, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the village upper crust who had so looked forward to their arrival and contributed to their victory. The Whites' policy disorganised and ruined the economy. The desired freedom of trade gave the peasants worthless banknotes for which they could buy absolutely nothing. The Whites' agrarian policy which restored the rights of former landlords also infuriated the peasants. The nationalities' policy of the White generals who wanted to suppress the various peoples was a further cause of discontent.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 418.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 491.

The hesitant peasants had learnt their lesson. They realised that there could be no neutral position in the Civil War and that they had to choose between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

THE ALLIANCE WITH THE MIDDLE PEASANT

The poor peasants were always true allies and reliable supporters of the working class at all stages of the revolution and the Civil War. The middle peasant also supported Bolsheviks and the working class on questions of land and peace from the beginning of the revolution. But, as Lenin said, "he wavered, is wavering, and will continue to waver".¹

This inconsistency was due to the dual character of the middle peasants. They were toilers who were exploited century after century by the landlords and who bore the yoke of the kulaks; in the struggle against oppressors, they sought alliance with the working class. On the other hand, the middle peasant was a proprietor. Infringement of his interests drew him away from Soviet power and brought him closer to the whiteguards. It was hard for the middle peasant to agree with the need to deliver surplus grain to the state at fixed prices and with the promulgation of the state monopoly on grain trade.

It was not easy to discard old ideas and habits. The middle peasant had to be continually informed about the nature of Soviet power; who the Bolsheviks were; what they promised to the peasantry; why, against whom and for what they were fighting and why there was a need for alliance between workers and peasants.

The foundation for the alliance was laid by the transfer of all land to the peasantry. The agrarian problem during the Civil War was the whet-stone which revealed the attitudes of all parties, and political and military coalitions to the needs of peasants. It was precisely the solution of the agrarian problem that proved that the Bolsheviks were all set

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 191.

to defend the transfer of all land to the peasantry; it was on this very question that the whiteguards exposed the spuriousness of their promises. The middle peasant was quick to realise this.

The change in the political views of middle peasants coincided with profound social transformations in the countryside. With the transfer of land to the peasantry the middle peasant became the central figure in rural areas. At the beginning of 1919 middle peasants accounted for 60 per cent of the rural population. The middle peasant *had* to become the ally of the working class. So it was worthwhile to try and win him over.

The question of how to determine the attitude of the proletariat to the middle peasant was given very serious consideration at the Party's Eighth Congress in March 1919. A great deal of hard work was needed to overcome the instability of the middle peasant, to win him over to socialism and to socialise his land holding. Lenin pointed out that coercion would achieve nothing. The peasant was a practical man; he should be convinced that the commune was better than private farming. Lenin said:

"Nothing is more stupid than the very idea of applying coercion in economic relations with the middle peasant."

"The aim is not to expropriate the middle peasant but to bear in mind the specific conditions in which the peasant lives, to learn from him methods of transition to a better system, and not to dare to give orders! That is the rule we have set ourselves."¹

The congress unanimously approved the new policy in relation to the middle peasants.

In accordance with its decisions a plan of measures favouring the middle peasantry was drawn up in the spring of 1919. Lenin suggested that the extraordinary tax, food requisitions and other duties imposed on the middle peasants be abolished immediately; that the crafts and cottage industries be encouraged; that a check be kept to see that the principle of voluntariness was observed when people were accepted into communes; and that representatives of central

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 211.

Party and Soviet organisations be sent to different localities where they would guard the interests of middle peasants.

In 1919 the Soviet government took important steps to ease the position of the middle peasant. The state granted him material aid, whilst explanatory and propaganda work was conducted in the countryside.

The so-called propaganda trains, vans and ships which travelled throughout the country were very popular with the peasants. In the period from late 1918 to 1921 five such trains—*Oktyabrskaya Revolutsiya*, *Imeni Lenina*, *Krasny Kazak*, *Krasny Kavkaz*, and *Krasny Ustok*—and the vessel *Krasnaya Zvezda* covered most of the gubernias in the republic, arranged 2,887 meetings and lectures, and 1,958 film shows, and sold about 11.5 million rubles' worth of political literature. Their propaganda work involved more than 10 million people. Amongst the outstanding Party and Government leaders who headed the propaganda trains in 1919 and 1920 were M. I. Kalinin, N. K. Krupskaya, A. V. Lunacharsky and Y. Yaroslavsky.

M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (President of the Republic) made 240 speeches. He used to say that he came not to teach, but to learn about the needs of peasants, to hear their complaints and see what could be done about them immediately. Kalinin wanted to know the attitude of the people to the measures taken by the Soviet officials. "The actions of officials in the administration must be checked and rechecked," he used to say, "otherwise they will soon go corrupt. Moreover, many enemies have succeeded in infiltrating our agencies; they want to spoil everything. If you keep silent, it will be not easy to unmask them. Were there any illegal requisitions? Did any one threaten to put you to the wall?"

Gradually the peasants became talkative and put questions. Kalinin answered. All his meetings with peasants were held in an informal atmosphere.

The turning point in the political attitudes of peasants (the first signs of which had appeared in the autumn of 1918) came in 1919. In the autumn of 1918 middle peasants declared: "We are for Soviet power, but not for communes!"; in 1919 they began to say: "Let it be communes, but not drudgery for the gentry!"

It would be wrong to overestimate the significance of this turning point. Peasants did not as yet fully understand Soviet power; they disagreed with it on some issues and they even eyed with hostility some of the government's measures. Nevertheless they supported the Soviet government because it gave them land and protected it from the landlords.

Progressive peasants wanted to acquire knowledge; they opened schools and cultural centres; they wished to change their life and work on communist principles.

The years of the revolution were marked by a great thirst for knowledge and organisation among rural young people. The number of local organisations of Komsomol (Young Communist League) was increasing along with the size of their membership. Komsomol members played a major part in the education of peasants. They opened schools and libraries, and arranged amateur dramatics, literary discussions, talks, lectures and public readings of newspapers and brochures on revolutionary subjects. These activities stimulated cultural development in the countryside. In spite of the Civil War, hunger and chaos, the winds of change affected the broadest strata of the rural population. Newspapers daily printed stories about new developments in all parts of Russia.

Agricultural techniques aroused interest everywhere. Peasants began to look for new methods of land tenure, crop rotation and sorting of seeds; they became interested in multiple crop rotation. Courses and lectures in agronomy were arranged for farmers.

Peasants began to join together to build tanneries, brick factories, workshops, flour-mills and saw-mills. The Soviet authorities supported these projects by giving grants and sending specialists and equipment.

Peasants began to acquire the habits of collectivism. Nurseries, free meals for children and medical aid were now available in villages, along with assistance given to the families of Red Army men. Following the example of town-folk, peasants began to arrange their own subbotniks (voluntary unpaid labour on Saturdays). Prompted by Communists, peasants took part in subbotniks as lumber-jacks. In mid-October 1919 the newspaper *Bednota* reported on one of the first purely peasant subbotniks.

Broad masses of peasants were starting a new life. The waves emanating from the October Revolution had reached the most remote villages and changed ideas and customs.

The victories scored by the Red Army in the autumn of 1918 played a major role in overcoming the vacillation of the middle peasants.

The change-over in the sympathies of middle peasants occurred first and foremost in the liberated areas. They joyfully welcomed the Red Army and the restoration of Soviet power. After the trip with the *Oktyabrskaya Revolyutsiya* propaganda train, Mikhail Kalinin came to the conclusion that the vast masses of peasants—at least nine-tenths of the total peasant population—firmly supported Soviet power.

FOOD REQUISITIONING

The war-weary young Soviet republic was starving. Workers received scarce rations of bread; in some places there was no bread at all for lengthy periods, and disorders broke out in both towns and country.

The burning issue was where to get grain. Most of the grain-growing gubernias were occupied by the whiteguards and the interventionists. The countryside was in dire straits because of the imperialist war and the subsequent Civil War. There was a shortage of the implements, animals, manpower, and seed. Villages were running out of supplies, but the kulaks hoarded grain and refused to deliver it to the state. Prosperous middle peasants in the grain-growing gubernias also had grain.

The Soviet government had no opportunity to obtain farm products by trade because it had no manufactured goods in exchange. So the only way out was food requisitioning, when each peasant household was ordered to deliver its surplus to the state at official prices paid in what was actually worthless money. It was an exigent step for saving the gains of the revolution. Since the purchasing power of money was null, it may be said that the peasants loaned the grain to the state.

Lenin wrote: "We said to the peasants: 'Of course, you are lending your grain to the workers' and peasants' state, but unless you do, you cannot expect to save the country from the landowners and the capitalists.'"¹

As a system of procurement, food requisitioning was introduced by the decree of January 11, 1919, but actually it began to take shape in the second half of 1918.

It was accompanied by a rigid state monopoly on grain and primary foodstuffs. Free trade in bread was declared a crime against the state. The state rationed bread strictly according to class affiliation.

The peasants were obliged to deliver to the state all surplus grain, leaving for themselves the minimal quantity for nourishment, for feeding cattle and for sowing. (By the end of the Civil War food requisitioning had been applied to all essential foodstuffs.)

The procurement of grain was conducted by the People's Commissariat for Food and its local agencies. Food detachments consisting of the most conscientious workers from industrial centres played an exceptionally important part in the struggle for grain in 1918-1920. These detachments numbered more than 70,000 workers. In addition, there were military units—the food army—which numbered 47,000 people during the campaign in 1919/20. Its structure was similar to the Red Army, and so it could be used to fight the whiteguards and the interventionists; and indeed it showed prowess in action against the whiteguards, Cossacks and kulak insurgents. The food detachments were assisted by the village poor.

In conformity with the state planned assignment, delivery quotas were fixed for districts, volosts, villages and individual households on the basis of sown acreage, yields, and state food rations for villagers and fodder rations for cattle (e.g., 192 kg of grain and 16 kg of groats a year).

Upon arriving in a village, the commission of a gubernia food committee or a food detachment would explain to the peasants why it was necessary to deliver grain; then they registered, with the assistance of poor peasants, all available stocks of grain in all peasant households. After setting aside the required minimum, they began to take the surplus. Deli-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 176.

very quotas were fixed in line with Lenin's principle—nothing from the poor, modestly from the middle peasant and much from the prosperous peasant. A certain percentage of the requisitioned grain was handed over to the Soviets for monthly distribution among the poor. The surplus grain was taken to state storage depots.

The food detachments explained the situation; propaganda work at this period was of exceptional importance. They called meetings, distributed propagandistic literature and helped to organise local Soviet administration. The food detachments greatly influenced the peasants and increased their trust in the working class and the proletarian state.

In the beginning, there were some difficulties. It was hard for the peasants who, if he had any surplus grain, was accustomed to dispatch it on his own, to acquiesce.

The kulaks openly expressed their dissatisfaction and resisted. The poor proved to be the Soviet government's only staunch supporters on this question. But sometimes even they fell under the kulak influence. Many of the poor were starving, and so the kulaks took advantage and "shared" some of their reserves before the arrival of the food detachments; as an act of gratitude, the poor peasants stood up to defend the kulak grain stocks.

As a result, some middle peasants and even poor peasants were induced by the kulaks to take part in anti-Soviet uprisings which often took place under such muddled slogans as "Down with Communists! Long live the Red Army! Long live Bolsheviks and free trade!" These instances showed how uninformed the peasants were. Active explanatory work, as further events proved, opened the eyes to the mass of peasants. But this work was obstructed by Socialist-Revolutionaries, deserters and former officers.

The Bolshevik Party did a great deal of explanatory work among the peasants. The practical experience of peasants, particularly of those who went through the hardships of the whiteguard regime, prompted them to take the correct decision. The peasants realised that Soviet power was strong and that it wanted to provide bread for the poor and hungry.

This is what Lenin said about the peasants at the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets: "In the summer of 1918 they were dissatisfied with the Bolsheviks. They saw that the

Bolsheviks forced them to sell their surplus grain at a non-speculative price and so they turned to Kolchak. Now the peasant has seen, compared and arrived at a different conclusion. Despite all he was taught in the past, he has understood, because he has learned from his own experience what many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks do not want to understand from theory—that there must be one of two dictatorships, that he must choose either the dictatorship of the workers—and this means to assist all working people to throw off the yoke of the exploiters—or the dictatorship of the exploiters."¹

Food requisitioning was a sorry and bitter expediency, but it was the only way to save the revolution since the towns had no manufactured goods to send to the countryside. The peasants gave grain. They understood that only the proletarian state and its Red Army would help them to retain the land they had received and defend it from the whiteguards and interventionists. The peasants delivered grain even in excess of quota. They voluntarily collected grain and other foodstuffs for the army.

Procurements of grain were increasing from year to year. In 1917/18 the state procured about 1.18 million tons; in 1918/19—almost 1.73 million tons; and in 1919/20—3.4 million tons.

In December 1919 the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets noted the following in its appeal to the toiling peasants: "In the efforts of the Soviet republic to take the upper hand over capitalists and emerge peacefully from the war and ruin into stable well-being and into freedom for labour, the contribution of the toiling peasants is also great. The peasants sent their best sons to the Red Army. Last year the peasants provided the republic with 1.75 million tons of grain, and much hay and meat; they supplied the army with tens of thousands of horses. The peasants raised the victorious Red Army, while the workers provided the boots, the clothes and the weapons for this army of peasants and workers."

The task of the food requisitioning system was accomplished. The state held its own in the most difficult war; the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 220.

revolution was saved; industry, though completely disorganised, was preserved; the army and towns were provided with food. This was mostly due to the working class's alliance with the peasantry. Lenin wrote: "The peasant obtained from us all the land and support against the big landowners. In return for this, we were to obtain food."¹

This was the military and political alliance of the working class and the toiling peasantry.

How did food requisitioning affect the peasant economy? It cannot be denied that it was a heavy burden for the peasant to bear. But it would be incorrect to assume that the town robbed the village. The working class gave the peasantry everything it could afford—all its modest stocks of machines, consumer goods, textiles, sheet iron and ironmongery.

In 1918 and 1919 the workers in the consumer gubernias received 112 kg of grain each per annum, while the peasants in the grain-producing gubernias consumed 272 kg. In contrast, before the war they were consuming 256 kg of grain. Consequently, the per capita consumption of grain in the grain-growing gubernias increased during the most difficult years of the revolution.

The working class, which borrowed the minimum of food-stuffs, experienced much greater privations. It got only half of the essential amount of food, and so the workers had to go to the free markets where speculators demanded three times as much for bread.

The negative aspects of the food requisitioning system were in something else. The peasant saw little sense in producing surplus products because he could neither sell them nor derive any other advantage. So many peasants, particularly the prosperous ones, reduced sowing or began to sow other crops instead of grain. The disorganisation of agriculture, caused by the imperialist and civil wars, was aggravated by the emergency food policy.

Food requisitioning was a necessary measure for supplying towns and fronts, but as soon as the war ended, it no longer had a part to play in the proletariat's economic plan for building socialism. So it was abolished.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 486-87.

THE PARTISAN MOVEMENT

Besides helping the revolution with grain, the peasants fought shoulder to shoulder with workers.

From passive resistance peasants passed to active struggle against the whiteguards and foreign interventionists. The White generals were beset not only by elusions of mobilisation dodging and desertion, but also by peasants' armed detachments which routed punitive forces and defended their own villages, volosts and even whole districts.

Peasants uprisings began to occur more frequently in the White armies' rear. The White army itself was gripped by discontent. Desertions, robberies and assassinations of officers were widespread.

Partisan detachments were poorly armed. However, by 1919 the partisan movement had assumed a mass scale. In the summer of 1919 large peasant and Cossack detachments led by I. A. Kochubei and Y. D. Balakhonov molested the Whites in the Kuban. Soon the partisan movement spread all over the occupied territory.

The political views of middle peasants on the territory occupied by Denikin sharply changed in the autumn of 1919. They were indignant at the order to deliver a third of the harvest to the landlords; Denikin's mass mobilisation resulted in mass uprisings. In Taurida Gubernia 13,000 of the mobilised peasants revolted. A people's war against the whiteguards started in the Ukraine in the autumn.

The insurgent movement of poor Cossacks, craftsmen and urban "aliens" in the North Caucasus was so strong that it gave birth to the Taman Army. It had 16,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, 30 cannon and a train of 20,000 refugees. This army swept along the roads of the Black Sea region. Poorly clothed, with no boots, no weapons and hardly any food, it forced its way towards the Red Army; on the way it dealt crushing blows to the enemy and snatched his provisions, munitions, weapons and even armoured trains.

In Daghestan and in the Terek river valley the partisan movement was also gathering momentum. Denikin himself admitted that the North Caucasus was a "boiling pot".

In 1919 the whole of Siberia was in revolt. The partisan movement there was a real peasant war led by the working class from its underground Bolshevik headquarters. By 1920 nearly 140,000 people were involved. The war was so successful that the insurgents created nearly ten large Soviet-partisan districts with a population of up to 1.5 million in the rear of Kolchak's army. These small republics held their own for a few months and some of them for as long as a year. The reinstated Soviets implemented revolutionary reforms in the countryside; they abolished Kolchak's administration, set up Soviets, nationalised land, etc.

The national areas of Siberia were also affected by the partisan movement. Thousands of insurgents fought the interventionists and whiteguards in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. They protected the people, destroyed convoys and supply trains, routed punitive detachments and fought their way towards the approaching Red Army.

INCORPORATION INTO THE RED ARMY

Although the partisan detachments were a formidable force, they still had many failings. The peasant did not want to be subordinated to a single command or to fight anywhere else but in his own district. Such detachments offered inadequate resistance to well-armed regular troops. It was, therefore, necessary to subjugate the partisan movement to the general military plan, establish discipline and reorganise detachments into regular units of the Red Army.

Most of the partisan detachments accepted this. The Red Army was often organised in the struggle against the enemy from the spontaneous partisan movement. Partisan detachments of poor and middle peasants gave birth to the famous 45th Volyn Infantry Division under the command of I. E. Yakir.

The workers who replenished the former partisan detachments consolidated their ranks. They brought discipline and helped to get rid of the negative aspects of the partisan movement. Many regiments in the Red Army were replenished by workers' detachments from industrial centres. The

Chapayev Division, for instance, was reinforced by a detachment of weavers, under the command of Dmitry Furmanov, from Ivanovo-Voznesensk.

Peasants and Cossacks formed the backbone of the legendary Red Cavalry. Red Cavalry squadrons were born in the Don and Kuban areas, in the Ukraine and Stavropol area. They were joined by Don and Kuban Cossacks, former cavalymen, Don and Stavropol peasants, and peasants from the Ukraine and central gubernias. In the First Cavalry Army 62 per cent were peasants; 14 per cent, poor Cossacks, and 24 per cent, workers.

The Civil War brought unparalleled initiative from the masses; many detachments, regiments and crews of armoured trains were made up of volunteers. The workers and peasants themselves formed and armed these military units. Several regiments were made up entirely of peasants. The poor peasants' committees helped to organise them. They sent peasants to the Red Army's command schools. On January 1, 1920, 48 per cent of those attending the Red Army's military schools were peasants (31.4 per cent workers, and 20.6 per cent others).

The conscription of peasants into the Red Army did not present any difficulty. Party organisations in industrial centres conducted a successful campaign in the countryside, particularly among young peasants. On April 24, 1919 a peasant mobilisation into the Red Army was announced. It was different from all former mobilisations in that there was no age limit. Each volost had to conscript anything between 10 and 20 staunch, reliable defenders of the Soviet republic. It was recommended that as many war veterans as possible be included.

The numerical strength and combat power of the Red Army was bolstered by great numbers of volunteers, particularly when peasants mobilised into White armies decided to desert and side with the Soviet government. By the end of 1919 the Red Army was more than 3 million strong. Most of the soldiers were peasants. In 1921 the Red Army numbered more than 5.5 million soldiers, of whom over 4 million (nearly 80 per cent) were peasants.

The Civil War produced commanders loyal to the cause of the revolution. In 1923 peasants accounted for 52.7 per

cent of the commanding personnel (workers accounted for 13.6 per cent, and others, for 33.7 per cent).

The Red Army was a school of courage for peasants who served in its ranks; moreover, it was a school where the illiterate could learn to read and write and to acquire elementary education, where the literate could further his knowledge. The Red Army was a school of political education; it imbued its soldiers with the spirit of consciousness and loyalty to the cause of the revolution. It was an important factor both in the victory over the enemy and in the fulfilment of the Red Army's lofty mission in the liberated areas.

As more and more territory was liberated from the white-guards at the end of the Civil War, more and more Red Army units became redundant. So in January 1920 the Soviet government decided to create the First Revolutionary Labour Army which, while remaining a military force, had to participate in peaceful reconstruction. Subsequently, several other armies were assigned labour tasks.

The labour armies were engaged in important economic rehabilitation. For instance, they repaired farm implements and machines. Red Army men helped peasants to cultivate the land.

Thus the Red Army, the army of workers and peasants, discarded the sword for the plough and hammer, which from the very beginning were its emblem. The plough and hammer in the centre of the five-pointed star, as the order of the republic's Revolutionary Military Council said, served as the distinguishing badge of "every serviceman in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army", as the symbol of the alliance of the working class and peasants which was forged during the struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution and consolidated during the Civil War.

THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

I. THE TRANSITION TO A NEW ECONOMIC POLICY. CONSOLIDATION OF THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE WORKING CLASS AND THE PEASANTRY

THE COUNTRYSIDE AFTER THE CIVIL WAR. AGRICULTURAL CRISIS

After the world war and the civil war the Soviet economy was one of the weakest in the world. Factories were either in ruin or at a standstill due to lack of raw materials. Mines, pits and oil fields were destroyed.

Agriculture was not in a much healthier state. In the Russian Federation the sown area was reduced by 20-25 per cent; in the Ukraine, by approximately 20 per cent, and in Byelorussia, by 30 per cent. The yields fell drastically and so did the gross production. In 1920 agricultural output stood at only 67 per cent of the pre-war level; grain harvests reached a little more than 50 per cent of the annual average in 1909-1913. This fact alone shows how critical the situation was. Normal supply of towns was out of the question; the villages themselves were short of bread. The country produced 1/27th the amount of cotton and 1/13th the amount of sugar beet that was produced in 1913.

Animal husbandry was in a poor state; the number of cattle was falling drastically; supplies of meat, lard, milk, wool and leather were dwindling. The urban population was starving and the situation in the countryside was also deteriorating.

The crop failure of 1920, particularly in the central gubernias, was a heavy blow.

The difficulties faced by the countryside were enormous. There was a crying need for implements—agriculture was short of millions of ploughs, of hundreds of thousands of

seeding and reaping machines; even sickles and scythes were in short supply. Repair work was also a problem. Village smithies were closed because the smiths had been mobilised into the army; in any case there was practically no iron or steel to work with. In 1921, 50-70 per cent farm implements needed replacement. Irrigation systems were disrupted.

The wars cost the lives of millions of farmers; 4.4 million people aged from 16 to 49 became invalids; 25 per cent of the able-bodied male population were lost.

The crisis in agriculture was self-evident. The prospects of rebuilding the economy were poor, since everything depended on the availability of industrial crops. This rebuilding had to be started with agriculture.

In the meantime, the political situation in the countryside had deteriorated.

In August 1920 armed bandits appeared in some villages in Tambov Gubernia. They attacked food agents, shot Communists, executives of village and volost Soviets, and looted co-operatives and state farms. This was the beginning of the so-called Antonov Mutiny—the kulak mutiny headed by the Socialist-Revolutionary Antonov. Kulaks staged revolts in many other parts of the country; dozens of bands roved the Volga area, the Don, Kuban and Terek. In February 1921 an uprising in West Siberia involved practically the whole of Tyumen Gubernia.

Fierce battles with Makhno's bands continued. Basmach bands waged a ferocious war against Soviet power in Central Asia.

This upsurge of kulak counter-revolutionary activity was due to the fact that the drastic situation in agriculture was aggravated by food requisitioning, which the peasants resented.

Food requisitioning was a heavy burden for the peasant, but during the war he did not complain because he knew that the sacrifice was imperative if the enemy were to be crushed. It was a historic exigency which ensured the minimum of food for towns and the army. But once the war ended, the peasant began to oppose food requisitioning more and more vigorously.

The enemies decided to take advantage of the shortage, ruin and mounting indignation so as to draw the peasantry

into counter-revolution. The toiling peasants had no ill feelings towards the Soviet government, but the counter-revolutionaries played upon their hesitation, confusion, weariness and the desire to freely dispose of their surplus products. Peasant actions inevitably fed the stream of revolts because they were led by kulaks.

Early in March 1921 the country was shocked by the news of the uprising in Kronstadt. Most of the insurgent sailors there were of peasant descent.

Soon, in spring 1921, it became clear that the peasantry was against food requisitioning. While contemplating the transition to the tax in kind, Lenin analysed the complex processes involved, understood the feelings of peasants and realised how poignant was the question of food requisitioning.

He arrived at the conclusion that "the peasantry is dissatisfied with the form of our relations, that it does not want relations of this type and will not continue to live as it has hitherto. This is unquestionable. The peasantry has expressed its will in this respect definitely enough. It is the will of the vast masses of the working population."¹

Economic problems were merged with the cardinal problems of policy—the alliance of the working class and peasantry, and the peasantry's attitude towards Soviet government and its policy of war communism, as food requisitioning was called.

The only way to save the situation was to discard the principles of war communism and to consolidate the alliance on an economic basis. The Communist Party decided in favour of this course.

THE TAX IN KIND

Early in the spring of 1921 Lenin and the Party formulated the principles of the new economic policy, which later became known as NEP. The old policy, war communism, which fully justified itself during the bitter struggle against

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 215-16.

the enemies, had to be replaced by something else. Lenin was engrossed in the new problems; he sought advice from his closest associates, rank-and-file Party members, government officials and simple peasants.

Lenin attended the conference of politically unaffiliated delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets in December 1920 and jotted down the speeches made by peasants, which he then sent to the People's Commissariats and members of the Central Committee.

The Party's Tenth Congress on March 15, 1921, heard and discussed Lenin's report and adopted the resolution on replacing food requisitioning by the tax in kind.

This was followed by a corresponding decree by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. A few days later the Council of People's Commissars fixed a total of 3.84 million tons of grain as the amount of tax in kind to be collected in 1921/22. The significance of this decision becomes clear if one recalls that the food requisitioning plan for 1920/21 envisaged 6.77 million tons.

In the meantime discussions were preparing the way for the decree on the tax in kind. It was promulgated on April 21 and stated that the tax for each household should be fixed according to the size of fields, the number of mouths to be fed and the harvest in the given locality.

Thus the substitution of the tax in kind for food requisitioning became a fact. Thereafter the peasant was allowed to dispose at will of what was left over after the payment of the tax in kind. This gave him the incentive to take part in the rebuilding and development of the economy.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE WORKING CLASS AND THE PEASANTRY

The introduction of the tax in kind was of tremendous significance. In essence, the measure was aimed at solving the radical questions of strengthening the alliance of the working class and the peasantry.

This alliance under the leadership of the working class is the corner-stone of Marxist-Leninist theory. The union of the hammer and sickle is the foundation of the Soviet state. The working class must build socialism hand in hand with the peasantry. Lenin said: "The principal problem that still confronts us—and will inevitably confront us for many years to come—is that of establishing proper relations between these two classes."¹

In that period the majority of peasants were engaged in individual, mostly small-scale farming. You cannot socialise peasant farming overnight. Lenin indicated that for a certain period after assuming power the working class must rely on small-scale farming.

This meant that they had to find adequate forms of alliance with individual peasants during the transition from capitalism to socialism. The vital question of the economy and policy for Soviet power Lenin said was "to find forms of coexistence with them"², meaning the peasants.

In defining these forms, Lenin showed the way in which the peasant could be satisfied and stimulated economically, without weakening the dictatorship of the proletariat or renouncing the task of building socialism.

At that time it was free trade that stimulated the economic activities of peasants. Being a small-scale commodity producer, the peasant had the right to dispose at will of surplus products, to sell them and to intensify his economy. That corresponded to the conditions of his existence, it generated material interest.

Free trade inevitably gave birth to capitalist elements in the countryside. The bourgeois ideologists, at home and abroad, and wavering elements in the Communist Party, therefore, began to say that NEP supposedly was a surrender to capitalism, a refusal to build socialism, etc. But these assertions had no theoretical or practical basis. The temporary and partial lenience in regard to capitalism did not mean a restoration of it. The Soviet government was fully in control of the situation. Its political power was backed by its command posts in the economy. The dictatorship of the

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 404.

² *Ibid.* p. 189.

proletariat was capable of restricting and checking the growth of capitalism.

The policy of leniency towards the bourgeoisie was, of course, neither simple nor smooth-running. Lenin warned that proliferation of capitalism was a great threat. A ruthless war was waged against it. It was "kill or be killed". Consequently, it was highly important to determine the degree to which the capitalist elements could be permitted, the degree of concessions, and the forms and methods of state regulation.

These principles were most brilliantly incorporated in the Land Code which was promulgated on December 1, 1922. Taking account of the fact that the peasants wanted to be masters of their own land, the code ensured stability of land tenure and the choice of farming methods (communal, sectional or collective), and provided advantages for the socialist forms, consolidating the principle of land nationalisation and the leading role of the state.

The Soviet state allowed kulak farming to develop to a certain extent, though it restricted its exploiter tendencies. The state categorically denounced all attempts to question the principle of land nationalisation, as this might have created conditions in which the village bourgeoisie would have gained rapidly in strength. The Soviet state gave every possible encouragement to collective and state farms, and helped the toiling peasants economically and politically.

At the Ninth Congress of Soviets in December 1921 Lenin said that "the new society, which will be based on the alliance of the workers and peasants, is inevitable. Sooner or later it will come . . . and when we work on the implementation of our New Economic Policy, we are helping to work out for the society the forms of alliance between the workers and peasants. We shall get this done and we shall create an alliance of the workers and peasants that is so sound that no power on earth will break it."¹

Lenin's words came true. The alliance between the workers and peasants, forged by Lenin, really proved to be inviolable; after many severe trials, it grew considerably in strength.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 177.

REACTION OF PEASANTS

With the transition to NEP there was a radical change in the mood of peasants. That they welcomed the tax in kind is seen in the numerous resolutions, non-Party conferences, and letters printed in the local and central press.

The Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets gave convincing proof of the unanimous support for the agrarian policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet government.

During the congress the unaffiliated delegates from the peasantry expressed their feelings of love for the Soviet republic and responsibility for the country's future.

Gradually, the work of village Soviets was improved. One of the main results was the participation of the peasant masses in state administration. The following figures illustrate the participation of peasants in the work of Soviets. In 1922 some 484,000 people were members of nearly 80,000 village Soviets in the Russian Federation. The absolute majority (94.3 per cent) were peasants. Ordinary peasants became involved in state administration. It is sufficient to say that more than 10 per cent of the deputies were illiterate. The defenceless peasants had the right to improve their political and educational level and to decide vital questions concerning their villages.

The struggle for the consolidation of the toiling peasantry was directed by Communists. At the beginning of 1922 there were four Communists per 1,000 of the total population, and only two Communists per 1,000 of the rural population. Kulak bands operating in many of the gubernias made the work of village Communists even more difficult.

Communists in the countryside set an example of courage and loyalty to the Party. They did their work selflessly and modestly, and even risked their lives to implement the Party's policy. Slowly but surely they learned how to administer political, economic, organisational and cultural life in the countryside.

Village Komsomol members were reliable assistants. They backed all Party and government campaigns in the countryside. Together with Communists they orga-

nised sowing campaigns, harvesting, conferences and meetings.

Komsomol members were actively engaged in cultural and educational work; they helped schools, established amateur art groups, and organised the work of cultural centres and libraries.

Full of enthusiasm and vigour, they personified the future of the countryside.

The attraction of women into social and political life was an exceptionally important task. A great obstacle was the patriarchal belief that the woman's place was in the household. So the Communist Party and the Soviet state exerted great effort to educate farm-women politically and culturally and to draw them into social and political life. In 1924 there were about 40,000 (7.9 per cent) women deputies to the village Soviets.

The swift suppression of kulak revolts was followed by a radical change in the mood of the peasants. Peasant volunteer detachments protected volost and village revolutionary committees. Peasants joined Red Army units in hunting down the insurgents.

A major part was played by the Party's propaganda amongst the peasants, particularly in the insurgent districts.

The main forces of Antonov were routed between April and June 1921. The insurgents surrendered en masse. The disorganised bands left in the forests were all destroyed in the first half of 1922.

Crushing blows were dealt to the atamans (chiefs) in the Ukraine. Nestor Makhno, the most dangerous of them, fled to Rumania.

Lenin was absolutely justified in drawing the following conclusion in November 1922: "The peasants are satisfied with their present position. We can confidently assert that. . . . The position of the peasantry is now such that we have no reason to fear any movement against us from that quarter. We say that quite consciously, without exaggeration. This we have already achieved. The peasantry may be dissatisfied with one aspect or another of the work of our authorities. They may complain about this. That is possible, of course, and inevitable, because our machinery of state and our state-operated economy are still too inefficient to avert it; but any

serious dissatisfaction with us on the part of the peasantry as a whole is quite out of the question. This has been achieved in the course of one year."¹

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FAMINE

In the summer of 1921 the country was hit by a new and terrible calamity—drought. In April the sun was merciless, the average temperature approached the June average; dry, hot weather continued in May and June.

The principal agricultural regions of Soviet Russia were hit by a severe drought. Crops withered in the Volga area, in many gubernias and districts of the eastern Ukraine, North Caucasus, the Urals, Kazakhstan and Central Russia. The disaster areas had a population of approximately 30 million peasants.

Things were aggravated by the fact that the areas hit by the drought had been ruined by the war and the intervention.

The situation was particularly tense because of the general devastation; there was a shortage of manpower, draught animals, implements, fertiliser, seed of any kind. So it was very hard indeed for the peasant to battle against the calamity. When the reactionaries abroad were yelling, "That's the socialist economy for you!", Lenin pointed out: "Quite naturally, of course, they said nothing about the famine actually being the terrible result of the Civil War."²

The people's trials in the starving gubernias were unendurable. In many areas the majority of peasants were starving.

Month after month the press wrote about people swelling from starvation, about thousands of orphans roaming the towns and quays on the Volga in search of bread, about diseases—scurvy, dysentery, typhoid fever—and about high mortality due to starvation.

The Party appealed to the nation to save the starving people and help them with food and seed for sowing.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 424-25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 424.

The nation rose as one to fight the terrible calamity.

The Party's Central Committee pointed out: "The calamity is so great that it can be overcome only by the joint and strenuous efforts of all the organised forces in the Soviet republic."

The headquarters of the struggle against starvation was the Central Commission for the Famine Relief headed by Mikhail Kalinin, the republic's President.

Food and money were rushed to the afflicted areas. The people donated nearly 176,000 tons of food and great sums of money.

The state provided thousands of tons of grain, potatoes and other provisions; in addition it supplied fodder for the perishing cattle.

In the summer of 1922, 30,000 canteens feeding 12.5 million people had been opened in starvation areas.

The starving peasants had no seed for sowing. If the fields had been left fallow, the rehabilitation of agriculture on a nation-wide scale would have been greatly protracted. But the state had no reserves of seed, so they had to come from the next harvest. To do so it was necessary to step up the collection of the tax in kind and to rush grain to the railways and swiftly deliver it to the emergency areas.

The task was successfully accomplished. In the second half of August 1921 many gubernias with satisfactory harvests fulfilled their assignments.

Trainloads of seeds covered nearly 200 kilometres a day—a record at that time. The railwaymen did their best to keep the tracks open. The seeds—224,000 tons of them—arrived on time. In spring, more than 656,000 tons of grain seed were collected for the emergency areas.

It was a great moral victory. One can imagine the panic, helplessness and confusion among the peasants in the drought-affected areas. Could they expect any help? Where was it likely to come from? The despair was too great, the hunger of the pre-revolutionary years still fresh in their minds. In those days the peasants could not hope for any assistance, they were doomed.

But now the supply of seeds filled the peasant with vigour and hope that he would retain his farmstead.

In the final count, 75 per cent of the winter crop acreage

was sown. Children and adults, and the sick and disabled spared no efforts in ploughing the fields and sowing.

The afflicted regions were supplied with materials for repairing farm implements. Urban workers helped village smithies and repair shops. Agronomic techniques were improved. A special government decree ordered the establishment of courses to overcome ignorance of agricultural techniques. Nearly 5,000 Party and trade-union activists were sent to organise sowing in the Russian Federation.

The aftermath of the war and the crop failure in 1921 made the situation quite perilous. There was a shortage of horses and oxen, the need for farm implements could not be satisfied. The state's supply of seed, though increasing all the time, was inadequate. So in the spring of 1922 the sown area was once again reduced.

During the spring and summer of 1922, the country anxiously listened to the weather reports, fearing new natural calamities. But the anxiety proved groundless, the harvest was excellent—more than 35 million tons of grain.

There was a considerable increase in the acreage sown in the autumn of 1922. The situation in agriculture improved. The worst was over, the process of rehabilitation became stable and more successful.

The onslaught against hunger demonstrated the might of the Soviet state. One would have thought with the unbelievable chaos in industry and transport there was no hope of avoiding a catastrophe in agriculture, but the Soviet government succeeded in mobilising resources and by means of a single plan, using them to solve the most urgent and fundamental problems.

The Communist Party succeeded in mobilising workers, peasants, and intellectuals in the struggle against hunger.

Thus, thanks to the efforts of the whole nation the Soviet state's most difficult trial was overcome.

REHABILITATION AND ITS SUCCESSES

The First All-Union Agricultural Exhibition was opened on August 19, 1923. It reflected the first successes of crop-growing and cattle-breeding, helped to popularise, ad-

vanced methods and enhanced the progress of Soviet agriculture.

The opening of the exhibition was in itself an important and significant event. Only two years previously the chaos was catastrophic. Nevertheless the country succeeded in increasing the acreage of land under crops, the harvests and efficiency and in raising the living standards of the population. In 1923 the area under crops was 91.7 million hectares—an increase of 14 million over the preceding year.

In 1924 and 1925 the figure was gradually increased by 6 million hectares each year. By 1925 the acreage had reached the 1913 level.

The total area under crops was growing, particularly that of wheat.

In 1924 cotton and sugar beet harvests reached their pre-war levels.

In the same year the potato harvest was 50 per cent higher than in 1913. The area under sunflower and its harvests were increased.

The loss of cattle during the preceding years was replenished in 1923-1925; all sectors of cattle-breeding (except horse-breeding) surpassed the 1916 levels.

So, in spite of all the difficulties the rehabilitation of agriculture was completed in 1925. Though there were certain disproportions and even backwardness, the principal task was accomplished. The wounds inflicted during the war had been healed, the devastation overcome. It was a major success for the Soviet state.

G. M. Krzhizhanovsky wrote: "Even in the first years of NEP many foreign researchers believed that our agriculture could only be rehabilitated by a great influx of foreign capital. Many of our officials believed that restoring agriculture to its pre-war level would be an exceptionally lengthy process which would take much longer than the first decade."

All these predictions were refuted in practice. Soviet agriculture was rehabilitated in the shortest possible period of time. The rates at which the areas under crops and the cattle population were restored surpassed the growth rates in the capitalist countries, though they suffered much less from World War I.

The explanation lies in the essence of the Soviet system. For the first time in history the peasants received comprehensive assistance from the state. Having been granted incentives under NEP, the peasantry showed great economic and labour activity. The small-scale commodity peasant economy was able to draw on its reserves thanks to the agrarian revolution which liberated it from the yoke of feudalism. The reserves, of course, were limited; the weakness of small-scale production and its inability to raise the level of agriculture to any great extent were bound to have an effect in the long run. However, at this particular stage small-scale production ensured the rehabilitation of crop cultivation and cattle-breeding.

The state assisted the peasants, particularly in backward regions. It greatly helped the peasants in the Central black-earth regions where agricultural rehabilitation was lagging behind the rest of the country.

The state organised a system of credits for middle and poor peasants. The scope of credit operations was increased significantly in 1924 after the inauguration of the Central Agricultural Bank.

The supplying of villages with farm machinery took place almost exclusively via state or co-operative organisations. Having increased the output of farm machinery (the pre-war level was surpassed in 1925 and 1926), the state passed a special law in January 1924 on the sale of farm implements and machines at pre-war prices. In other words, the state sustained losses in the interests of the peasants when it began to sell machines at reduced prices (below production costs).

State agencies did a great deal of work in land management. Strip and distant-field farming were abolished.

The network of state and co-operative seed farms was expanding and providing improved-quality seeds; stud farms provided pedigree cattle and horses.

The Soviet government took steps to promote agricultural education, train agronomic personnel and educate the farm population in agronomics. Agronomic courses and circles, talks, lectures and consultations were arranged in villages.

The state's versatile assistance and the labour activity of peasants were decisive factors in the rehabilitation of agriculture.

II. THE COUNTRYSIDE AT THE CROSS-ROADS

THE POLICY OF INDUSTRIALISATION

By the middle of the 1920s the country's economy was rehabilitated. The working class and the Communist Party now had to press forward with economic development.

In December 1925 the Party's 14th Congress adopted a course for comprehensive development of heavy industry as the principal link in the creation of a material and technical base for the new social order. Highly developed industry, primarily heavy industry, capable of producing and improving machinery for all sectors of the economy was needed to eliminate economic backwardness, ensure the country's independence and defence potential and raise the people's material and cultural standards. The Party's 14th Congress set the task of transforming the USSR from a machine-importing country into a machine-manufacturing country.

It was a very difficult and complicated task. To catch up with the advanced capitalist countries the USSR had to raise its industrial production between eight- and tenfold. The capitalist countries took from 50 to 70 years to achieve such growth. The Soviet Union could not wait that long. The respite which it had won could at any moment be terminated by imperialist aggression.

The domestic situation also required high growth rates of industrial development. The Soviet state could not rely for too long on the various forms of production—large-scale socialist industry and the technically backward small-commodity peasant economy. The kulaks—the last but most numerous class of exploiters—were still there, in the countryside. They waged a bitter war against socialism. The new economic policy ensured swift rehabilitation of the economy and contributed to the strengthening and growth of the socialist mode of production. But the capitalist elements in town and countryside were also stimulated. Agriculture had to be made more efficient and reorganised on socialist lines so as to shut off once and for all a possible source for the revival of capitalism.

The objective need dictated the greatest possible growth rates of socialist industrialisation. The Soviet people willingly endured sacrifices so as to build a powerful economic foundation for socialism within the shortest possible time.

Construction sites began to appear all over the country; factories, plants and new branches of industry arose. Old enterprises were reconstructed. As a result, socialist industry began to develop rapidly from the very first years of industrialisation. In 1926 the Soviet Union's general industrial level just reached the pre-war level; in 1929 it exceeded it by 50 per cent. The growth rates for heavy industry, which manufactured capital goods, were particularly high. In 1929 its output was 100 per cent higher than in 1913. In the same period, light industry increased its output by 37 per cent above the 1913 level. The USSR was turning into a mighty industrial power.

THE RURAL POPULATION

When the Party's 14th Congress outlined the course for socialist industrialisation in December 1925, the country's economic development, including the correlation between industry and agriculture, was approximately at the same level as before the war.

The peasantry constituted the majority of the population. According to the general census, in 1926 the population of the USSR was 147 million, of which 26.3 million lived in towns (17.9 per cent), and the rest (120.7 million, i.e., 82.1 per cent) in the country. Soviet Russia was still an agrarian country.

The fact that the peasantry was widely scattered throughout the country presented a great obstacle to economic, political, educational and cultural development. There were 613,587 settlements and villages with a population of about 200 people (an average of 40 peasant households) each. This average figure, however, concealed numerous differences generated by natural, geographic, production and national conditions.

The north-east, north and north-west of the European part of the USSR were forest areas with numerous lakes. The ploughlands were small in area and divided by vast forests and swamps. Naturally, the countryfolk settled in small villages, scattered along the banks of rivers and lakes. In the north-west the villages consisted on average of no more than 14 or 15 households; a third of them had only 2 or 4 households, and a fifth, anything between 5 or 10 households. It was the same in the north and north-east. Those were really forlorn parts with no access to political and cultural centres. The class differentiation of poor and middle peasants was particularly striking; life was almost the same as in patriarchal times.

In the south and east the forests and swamps gradually gave way to fertile land; the population and the size of village communities increased. In the west of Russia villages consisted on average of 28 households; in Byelorussia, there were 20 or 22 households; in the central industrial region 30 households, and in the Urals 35 or 36 households. Villages of more than 100 households were commonplace.

In the black-earth belt, on the lower and middle reaches of the Volga, in the North Caucasus and in the Ukraine with their forest-steppe and steppe lands the character of village communities and their size was altogether different. There was enough fertile land for cultivation, but further down in the south-east the water resources were scarce. Villages stood on the banks of rivers; the number of inhabitants was quite large—an average of 80 households per settlement. Nearly two-thirds of the villages had more than a hundred households. Many villages had 500, 1,000 and even 2,000 households.

The great size of villages and the concentration of peasants made it easier to conduct political, cultural and educational work. The class contrasts were more clearly expressed, the social contradictions were more manifest, and it was much easier to achieve class consolidation.

The settlements of nomads in Kazakhstan and Kirghizia were very small. In Kazakhstan 21,400 of the 77,300 settlements had a population of less than 20 people, and 27,000 settlements had from 20 to 49 inhabitants each. But there were Russian and Ukrainian villages with anything between

2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants. Uzbek and Tajik villages had an average of 250-270 inhabitants.

The different natural and geographic conditions were supplemented by national, social, economic and cultural differences in the life of the peasantry.

Even after a casual acquaintance with the rural population in the Soviet Union one notices the great number of nations and peoples, big and small, who either live in compact communities on definite territories or are dispersed among other nations. The census of 1926 revealed that there were 174 national and ethnic groups among the rural population, including 110 groups which inhabited traditional territories in the USSR.

The national composition of the peasantry was as follows: Russians—61.2 million (50.7 per cent of the rural population in the USSR); Ukrainians—27.9 million (23.1 per cent); Byelorussians—4.2 million (3.5 per cent); Kazakhs—3.9 million (3.2 per cent); Uzbeks—3.2 million (2.6 per cent); Tatars—2.8 million (2.3 per cent); Azerbaijanians and Georgians—1.5 million each (1.3 per cent); Mordovians—1.3 million (1.1 per cent); Chuvash and Germans—1.1 million each (0.9 per cent); Armenians—1 million (0.8 per cent); Tajiks—0.8 million (0.7 per cent); Turkmen and Bashkirs—0.7 million each (0.6 per cent).

The rural countryfolk were employed almost exclusively in agriculture. Farming was the principal occupation for 71.7 million people. This meant that they produced food for the remaining 75.3 million of the population not engaged in farming (including the urban population). In other words, each farmer "fed" only one person besides himself.

The weak inter-sectoral division of labour in the countryside and the absolute predominance of the rural population reflected the country's generally low level of economic development, primarily that of labour productivity in agriculture. This was aggravated by the great span of working age. Peasant children began work when they were ten, i.e., at that age they already entered the "gainfully employed" category. There was virtually no upper age limit, since peasants worked to the last if they were not seriously ill. In no other employment category were the younger and the eldest generations placed in more unfavourable conditions.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the spreading of elementary literacy, not to mention school education, presented tremendous difficulties. Hence the inevitable low level of culture, political illiteracy and retention of patriarchal traditions.

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

Village communities played an exceptionally important role in the countryside.

The Russian village community was a typical organisation of associate land-tenure. It was an association of peasant households which satisfied their needs as co-owners of land; it was based on the usual form of residence in villages or settlements. The association was a democratic (communal) organisation of local self-government. The penetration of capitalism into agriculture at the turn of the century undermined the village communities, but somehow or other they managed to survive.

The October Revolution rejuvenated the dying organisation. The community and its self-government helped the local peasants to fight their landlords and to distribute the landlord estates among the peasants. During the egalitarian distribution of land the village community was revived; it spread its power over the greater part of the countryside.

Soviet power, however, substantially renovated the village communities, both in form and content. Soviet law abolished its reactionary aspects (such as suretyship and villenage dependence on communities).

The highest executive organ of a community was the meeting of full-fledged members, i.e., all tenants of 18 and over. The Soviet government democratised the village meetings, instructing that they should be attended not only by house-owners, but also by all members of the households, including women who previously had no voice in community affairs.

The peasant meetings abided by the Soviet land legislation and local customs; they took decisions on all questions of land

tenure, regulated communal duties, fixed the amount of cash contributions for land management, court proceedings, upkeep of shepherds, etc. Provided that the decisions did not run counter to the existing legislation, no one had the right to annul or amend them. The meetings elected representatives who were charged with solving routine questions of land tenure, protecting community interests in land or judicial committees, etc.

The peasant in the community had the right to a lot of communal land and to use, in conjunction with others, communal land suitable for agriculture. The primary condition for the existence of the peasant land community was the quota principle of allocating land to individual households and its periodical redistribution so as to ensure equal land tenure. The second condition was the availability of land for common utilisation by all members of the community. All cultivated land (for ploughing or hay-making) was distributed among the members for private use. This land constituted 70 to 80 per cent of the total area possessed by the community. The rest (pastures, paths, forests, inconveniently situated land, etc.) remained at the joint and undivided disposal of all members of the community.

The size of private lots was not constant. The basic principle—the right of each member to an equal lot from the communal acreage—led to periodical egalitarian redistribution of land.

The advantages that the village community offered for the building of socialism were the traditional mutual aid, the absence of age-long devotion to a definite plot of land and the availability of communal lands for common use by many households, frequently by whole villages. The new collective farms had no need to devise complexes of agricultural land. But in some important aspects the communities were in outright contradiction to the socialist reforms.

The community consisted of poor peasants, middle peasants and kulaks; it gave them all equal rights in communal affairs. The kulak, who was deprived of the right to take part in the election to the Soviets, could elect and be elected to the communal organs of administration. The authority he enjoyed as an efficient farmer and the economic dependence

of weak farmers, afforded the kulak the opportunity of running communal affairs as he saw fit.

The community was the full-fledged administrator of all land allotted to the peasants; it, therefore, exercised great influence in the countryside and in certain cases it began to confront the local organs of state power—village and volost Soviets.

The frequent, almost yearly redistributions of land, which took place during the agrarian revolution, continued through the NEP period. The changing size and location of fields discouraged the peasant from investing so as to raise the fertility of the soil (application of fertilisers, land reclamation, etc.) and from sowing perennial crops.

The community was only concerned with allocating more or less equally fertile and conveniently situated lots in the available fields under conventional crop rotation. The most widespread distribution of land assumed the following pattern: each field under crop rotation (winter, spring or fallow under the three-field system) was divided into tiers depending on the distance from the field to the village. The tiers were divided into lots of equal fertility. The member of the community got a strip in each lot according to the number of the allotment units he was entitled to (mostly according to the number of mouths to feed in the family). So usually the strips were small and they criss-crossed one another. It is sufficient to say that each household often had anything from 20 to 40 strips, and sometimes as many as 60 to 80.

Communal land tenure and the strip system went hand in hand with compulsory crop rotation and communal cattle-grazing on fallow lands and stubble fields. The strip system compelled the peasants to abide by the crop rotation established in the community. According to the established customs, the peasant meetings also fixed the time for applying fertilisers, for ploughing, sowing and harvesting; the time-schedule was compulsory for all members. This naturally conserved the extensive system of crop rotation, restricted initiative and preserved primitive methods of agronomic techniques.

The time lost in going from one strip to another during harvesting increased production costs of small-economy farming and decreased its profitability. The miserly size of strips

and their inconvenient location obstructed the employment of horse-drawn ploughs, sowers and reapers, not to mention tractors and other modern farm machines. Sometimes a strip was not more than 1.5 metres wide. The peasants complained that harrowing was difficult, it was almost impossible to ensure correct methods of cultivation.

In such conditions improved crop rotation, which inevitably implied replacement of the three-field system by multiple-crop rotation, would have obviously increased the number of strips (in proportion to the number of fields under crop rotation) and made the strip system even worse.

It was much easier to do away with the strip system in the middle and lower reaches of the Volga and in the North Caucasus where there was plenty of land. The main problem in the south-east and south was that the fields were widely separated. In big villages of 500 to 1,000 households clustered on the banks of widely separated rivers the lots were narrow strips which stretched for many kilometres from the economic centre to the watershed.

That of course increased the cost of farming; at the same time the area was decreased; the number of draught and dairy animals, and investment in production were reduced. For peasants whose fields were 9 or 10 kilometres away half their time and resources went on unproductive labour.

They wanted to eliminate the shortcomings of communal land tenure.

The peasants in western, central and south-east regions complained to the government about communal customs leading to inefficiency, about the difficulty of cultivating narrow strips, the instability of margins of criss-cross strips, aggravated by the frequent redistribution of land, about the terrible loss of time in going from one strip to another, about the great damage caused by grazing cattle and the practice of strong peasants, who were quicker to plough their strips, and seized the opportunity to plough the strips that belonged to others.

Some peasants tried to evade the inconveniences of communal land tenure by leaving the communes and settling down in secluded farmsteads, or hamlets. The peasant wanted to farm on his own, but neither the poor peasant nor the middle peasant had the means to do so. The weak peasant

had neither the means nor energy to move his house and ancillary buildings, to set up water reservoirs, roads, fences, etc. Only the wealthy peasant, primarily the kulak, could afford it. It was only natural that detached land tenure was not widespread. On January 1, 1927, it only covered some 8 million hectares or 3.4 per cent of the total land.

Thus even after a whole decade the small private farmer, who had received land from the Soviet government and who no longer suffered under the yoke of landlords and large bourgeoisie, failed in his attempts to use the basic means of production in agriculture rationally and effectively. The decade of free farming on free land proved to the peasant that it was impossible to carry on in the same way.

PEASANT ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Small private farming played a major role in agricultural production. In 1928 individual peasants possessed 97.3 per cent of the basic means of agricultural production (land, horses, cattle, machine and implements). Having distributed landlord estates and freed themselves from the yoke of landlords and big capitalists, small peasant households took over the dominant position in the countryside and they enjoyed the most favourable conditions for development.

But the production opportunities of small-scale farming proved to be inadequate. The egalitarian distribution of land increased the dispersion of the productive forces in the countryside. Tens of thousands of former seasonal farmhands and peasants who had previously moved to towns received land and started farming on their own. The process of disintegration of peasant families and division of property was intensified. In 1927 there were 25,015,900 peasant households as compared with 21,008,600 in 1916—an increase of 19.1 per cent. The average size of peasant families dropped from 5.7 to 5.1 people.

The disintegration of peasant households is, of course, incomparable with the increase in land holdings which re-

sulted from the agrarian revolution. In 1927 the average peasant family in the European part of the Russian Federation had 13.2 hectares of land against 10.08 hectares before the revolution. The fragmentation of the peasant economy was accompanied, moreover, by an increase rather than a decrease in the area under crops. In the period from 1925 to 1926, for instance, the number of households increased by 2.1 per cent, while the total area of land under crops in the country increased by 5.7 per cent. As long as there were undivided or easily developed lands, the fragmentation did not cause an absolute decrease in the size of farmsteads.

From 1927 onwards the area under crops grew somewhat slower; the rate of growth was not higher than the rate of increase in the number of households. In that year the sown area was increased by 1.9 per cent, while the number of households increased by 1.8 per cent. The further fragmentation would have been proportionate to the decrease in the size of holdings. However, the upsurge of the collective-farm movement in 1928-1929 and the migration of the rural population to towns decreased the number of farmsteads from 25,015,900 to 24,462,000.

Draught animals were the basic tractive force on small farms. Power mechanisation was making its first steps. In 1926 mechanical engines (excluding automobile transport) accounted for only 1.7 per cent of the tractive force in agriculture. So the problem of draught animals was of primary importance. The peasant who had no draught animals could not continue farming on his own. He ceased to be a small and independent producer; in other words he lost his identity as a peasant.

Notable changes occurred in the development of the technical base of agriculture, in the supply of machines and implements. The wood plough was ousted. In 1924 harrows and similar primitive implements accounted for 4,963,700 of the total of 5,717,500 ploughs and drill ploughs in the Russian Federation; in 1926 the number of ploughs and drill ploughs was increased by 1,101,900, while the number of wood ploughs and other primitive tools was reduced by 35,800. In 1927 the number of ploughs was increased by a further 924,000, while the number of wood ploughs dropped

by 253,300. This had a favourable effect on the development of agriculture.

The supply of farm machines (sowers, reapers, threshers, winnowing machines, etc.) was much worse. The sickle and scythe, the flail and thresh rollers prevailed. Sowing was done by hand everywhere. In 1927 only 15.2 per cent of farmsteads in the USSR had modern implements. There was one sower per 37 households, one reaper per 24, one mowing machine per 56, one manual or horse-drawn thresher per 47, and one winnowing machine per 25 households.

The three-field system predominated. It was accompanied by compulsory crop rotation, grazing of cattle on fallow land and stubble fields, and the small-strip system of communal farming. The development of agriculture was hindered by the extensive grain production, an insignificant portion of industrial crops, poorly developed animal husbandry and depletion of soil. Crop yields, marketable surplus and profits were limited.

The new economic policy encouraged peasants to develop agriculture and increase output. By the end of 1926 the total area under crops in the country reached 110.3 million hectares—an increase of 5.4 per cent over the pre-war level. The peasants put 5.3 million hectares of new lands to the plough.

It was not only a question of rehabilitation; the peasants were developing lands confiscated from landlords and the majority of kulaks. Thus the productivity of peasant households was raised. But it must be said that small peasants could hardly afford to develop the confiscated, formerly uncultivated lands because it required a great deal of labour and material expense. This is why in 1927 the increase in the area of sown land fell drastically.

It soon became clear that the growth rates of the grain production was somewhat lower than that of industrial crop production; it was inevitable that all the other branches of agriculture would be affected. In 1927 the areas sown to grain were fully restored. The yields even surpassed the pre-war levels. In pre-revolutionary Russia the highest yields—0.69 tons per hectare—were registered in the years from 1909 to 1913; in the period from 1922 to 1928 the average

yields were 0.77 tons per hectare. Naturally, the gross output also went up, but the rise in the yields fluctuated.

Dairy farming was advancing faster than all the other branches of agriculture. In 1928 there were 30.7 million cows—18 per cent more than in 1916; 146.7 million sheep and goats—an increase of 22.7 per cent; and 26 million pigs—an increase of 24.4 per cent.

The limited potential of small private farming was revealed above all in the production of grain for the market. During the period of rehabilitation agriculture provided enough grain to the state, but the policy of industrialisation and the accompanying urbanisation radically changed the situation. The country experienced a great shortage of farm products, particularly grain.

With the agrarian revolution the large-scale capitalist production of grain for the market receded into the background. In 1925 rich peasants provided only 12 per cent of grain for the market; prosperous peasants provided nearly 17 per cent; middle peasants—nearly 48 per cent; and poor households—about 23 per cent. Consequently, the prosperous households supplied less than a third of the grain for the market (29 per cent). The socialist forms of agriculture—collective farms and state farms—were not as yet developed. In 1927 they accounted for only 2.2 per cent of the gross production of grain. It was small-scale commodity production that replaced the large-scale capitalist production as the leading force in the grain market.

After the revolution the peasant was given the chance to work for himself and his own needs, and not for the landlords and capitalists. Peasant families began to consume more bread. This was due not so much to increased production as to the reduction of the portion allocated for selling on the market. During the period of industrialisation it became clear that small-scale farming could not ensure the required growth rates in the supply of agricultural products in general, and grain in particular.

Industrial construction was expanding. In the initial period of industrialisation the industrial population was swelled by a million people coming in from rural areas, and it was continuing to grow. In 1928 some 1,062,000 peasants moved

to towns; in 1929 the figure was 1,392,000. So the market demand for bread increased.

Before 1926 agriculture satisfied the urban population's demands for bread. As the production of grain increased, state purchases rose to 11,640,000 tons (from the harvest of 1926). However, even the slight decrease in the production of grain had an immediate and serious effect on grain purchases. In 1927 the state purchased 11 million tons—5.3 per cent less than in the previous year; in 1928 grain purchases fell to 10.8 million tons.

Kulaks and speculators took advantage of the situation and began to inflate prices. In two years prices went up generally by a factor of between four and six, and in some places even higher. Because of food difficulties, the Soviet government was compelled in 1929 to introduce rationing in towns.

The working class and the Communist Party were faced with the pressing task of raising agriculture to a level where it could satisfy the country's growing needs for food and raw materials. They had to establish large-scale production with modern machines capable of increasing labour productivity and the output for the market.

POOR AND MIDDLE PEASANTS. KULAKS

By the end of the twenties it became clear that small peasant households were unable to satisfy the needs of the country which had set out on the road to industrialisation. Moreover, they failed to solve their own problems, primarily the social problems in the countryside.

With the proletarian revolution in Russia there was a levelling of the situation in the countryside. On the one hand, many poor peasants joined the ranks of middle peasants; on the other, the rural bourgeoisie lost a considerable portion of its land and means of production; its numerical strength was also reduced. The number of middle peasants sharply increased. The economic system in the countryside adopted to the peasant's small-ownership, petty-

bourgeois ideals. Some 12 to 15 years went by before the peasant in the USSR realised the need to go over to collective cultivation of land. During this period the economic system in the countryside retained the features of "ideal" capitalism as the small peasant saw it, i.e., undeveloped, primitive capitalism in which the decisive role was played by the small property of the direct producer.

At the same time the radical change of social relations which followed the October Revolution, and above all the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, gave birth to new features in social and economic development in the countryside. The Soviet state used all means of political and economic influence to support the poor and middle peasants and prepare them for collectivisation, and to restrict the kulaks and then dispossess them. This is precisely what helped the small-scale peasants to hold on until the beginning of collectivisation.

The growth of the middle peasantry continued in the twenties. The number of poor households without draught animals and farm implements was diminishing. In the Russian Federation the number of horseless households decreased from 37.1 per cent in 1922 to 28.3 per cent in 1927; and the number of cowless households from 23.5 per cent to 18.2 per cent. According to the agricultural census in 1920, some 36.6 per cent of peasant households in the Russian Federation had no implements for ploughing, to say nothing of machines. In 1927 there were only 31.6 per cent of such households. These changes were indicative of the growth of the middle peasantry. However, the number of households without draught animals and farm implements was still too high. In most cases, one and the same household had neither draught animals nor farm implements.

At the same time, prosperous peasants were untouched by the October Revolution; the means of production in their possession exceeded their own labour resources. The craving to become rich led them on to the road of capitalist entrepreneurship, in which the labour of others is exploited.

The numerical proportion of these prosperous peasants was not significant. In 1922 only 3 per cent of the total number of peasants had three or more draught animals; in

1926 the percentage rose to 5.6. However, they owned a considerable number of draught animals.

Farm implements played the principal role in raising labour productivity and increasing sown areas, gross output and production for the market. But they were also unevenly distributed. An analysis of the census taken among 614,000 peasant households in 1927 indicates that most of the implements and means of production were in the hands of the middle peasants; 70.7 per cent of the households (mostly in the middle-peasant group) owned 79 per cent of all the means of production. This is precisely why the middle peasant became the central figure in agriculture.

The households of poor peasants and seasonal farmhands (26.1 per cent of the households) owned only 4.9 per cent of the means of agricultural production. They were unable to carry on independent agricultural production even for self-sustenance. The kulak households (3.2 per cent of the households) owned 16.1 per cent of the means of production. The inequality in the distribution of farm machines and implements was even greater. The poor peasants possessed only 1.6 per cent of the total number of farm machines and implements, while the kulaks owned 21.6 per cent.

Since poor peasants had no draught animals and farm implements and since middle peasants were also experiencing a shortage, kulaks were able to exploit them. Poor and middle peasants had to borrow the animals and implements from kulaks and prosperous peasants at extortionate rates.

Statistics throw some light on the scale of the hiring of the means of production and the extent to which each group of peasants was involved in it. In 1927 the means of production were rented by 40.2 per cent of peasant households; 16.1 per cent of peasant households hired them out. Thus more than half of the peasantry were involved in renting or hiring the means of production. These relations were particularly widespread in the country's grain-growing regions.

Working off the costs of renting implements, which was a concealed form of hiring cheap labour by kulak households, was widespread. In 1925 payment by work for borrowing a plough was made in 58.5 per cent of cases; payment in kind with grain accounted for 16.2 per cent of the

cases, and payment in cash—in 3.4 per cent. Poor peasants mostly paid with their work, middle and prosperous peasants paid in kind or in cash. Prosperous and kulak elements used the system of hiring out as a means for securing cheap labour, and exploiting the village poor. The payment in kind for implements amounted to a fifth of the harvest; when draught animals were also involved, the payment rose to a half of the harvest. The *métayage* system placed poor and weak peasants under the yoke of the kulaks.

Cultivation with hired implements adversely affected agricultural production. The peasant could hire the implement only after the owner had done his own farm work. Late ploughing and sowing reduced yields; late harvesting led to loss of grain. Payment was made according to the number of days the implement was used, so the peasant tried to finish the work as quickly as possible. There could be no question of efficient cultivation. Usually the yields per hectare cultivated with hired implements were 20 to 25 per cent lower. Consequently, the peasant, having paid for the hired implements, was left with less than a half of the harvest collected by households using their own implements; under the *métayage* system he was left with hardly a third of the harvest.

Some poor and weak peasants could not afford to hire the means of production, and so they worked for the prosperous neighbour or, leasing their landholdings fully or partially, sought work elsewhere. The Soviet state took into consideration the actual conditions in agriculture and permitted, within certain limits, lease of land. Leasing, however, never reached the pre-war level because landlord estates were abolished and all land was transferred for free use by the peasantry; another contributory factor was state restrictive control. At the beginning of NEP, however, there was a considerable increase in land-leasing. In the principal agricultural regions it involved 25 to 30 per cent of the peasantry, and in some places, as much as 40 to 50 per cent of peasant households.

Most of the land was leased by poor and weak peasants. According to the survey of 1926, some 72.4 per cent of landholdings were leased due to shortage of draught animals and farm implements, 7 per cent due to shortage of

hands, and 18.9 per cent due to bad land management and distant location of fields. Three-quarters of the leased land belonged to poor peasants. The composition of leaseholders was different. Poor peasants (19.9 per cent of leaseholders) hired only 9 per cent of the leased land; middle peasants (67 per cent)—60.5 per cent; and kulaks (13.1 per cent)—30.5 per cent. In some districts kulaks took more than half of the leased lands.

Middle peasants quickly developed their own holdings and began to expand production by renting land from others. In this way they usually increased their areas by 25 to 30 per cent. This they could manage to cultivate by their own efforts. Rent not linked with the exploitation of hired labour became known as labour rent.

But the kulaks, who had a third of the leased lands, pushed back the borders which land nationalisation had set in the way of private-ownership production. The land they rented frequently played just as an important role as their own holdings. In some districts households with 10 to 16 hectares rented an average of 5.2 hectares, or the equivalent of approximately 40 per cent of their holdings; households with sown areas of 16 to 25 hectares rented 11.8 hectares (50 per cent); households with sown areas of 25 and more hectares rented on average 19.3 hectares. The latter had to rely on hired labour.

In fact land-lease redivided the equally distributed land fund in conformity with the available means of production in households. Experience had shown the peasants that Lenin's assessment of the egalitarian land tenure was correct; it proved that even the most just distribution of land could not lift the kulak yoke and exploitation in conditions of private farming.

The exploitation of hired labour typified capitalist production relations in the pre-collectivisation countryside. The peasant who had neither horse nor tools leased his holdings completely or partially and went to work as a seasonal farmhand for the kulak, or sought work in towns. On the whole, more than half of peasant households (55.2 per cent) were involved in hired labour relations (35.4 per cent as hired labourers and 19.8 per cent as employers). These figures need some explanation. They include households

which only hired labour or worked for others at certain times.

In 1927 the army of seasonal farmhands amounted to 3.2 million people, of which 2.4 million suffered from capitalist exploitation on private farmsteads, on the farms of groups of private peasants or land associations. The rest found work in state or co-operative enterprises.

In 1927 there were 1.4 million households (nearly 900,000 kulak households and 500,000 middle, mostly prosperous, peasant households) which hired seasonal farmhands. However, this number does not take into account the concealed form of hire (relatives, adopted children, assistance, etc.) and day-labourers, many of whom hardly differed from seasonal farmhands in terms of the number of days they worked, though their position was much worse in terms of pay and labour protection. There were about 2.5 million day-labourers in 1927.

The village bourgeoisie continually violated the Soviet laws on working conditions for seasonal farmhands. In the first place, the working day was too long. At the height of field work, particularly during harvesting, farmhands had to work 14 and even 18-20 hours a day. The hire contracts often included such provisions as "to work from dawn to dusk", "the working day will last the full peasant day and not just 8 hours", etc. In summer, most farmhands had no days off even on public holidays and at weekends. Farmhands received the lowest pay in agriculture.

Having acquired the bulk of the means of production and leased land, and having subjected poor peasants and farmhands to exploitation, and enslaved them by usurer credits, the kulak households succeeded in expanding their production far beyond the limits of "toiler's production". On the eve of collectivisation (1927) in the country there were at least 350,000 big peasant households with 16 or more hectares of sown land. More than 1.5 million households sowed no land at all, while 3.3 million households sowed less than one hectare.

The following table illustrates the social stratification of peasants in 1924/25-1926/27:

Following the introduction of NEP the number of kulaks began to grow. In 1927 there were nearly a million kulak

Category	Self-employed (in thousand)			Percentage		
	1924/25	1925/26	1926/27	1924/25	1925/26	1926/27
Proletariat	2,184	2,454	2,560	9.7	10.9	11.3
Poor peasants	5,803	5,317	5,037	25.9	23.7	22.1
Middle peasants	13,678	13,822	14,280	61.1	61.7	62.7
Kulaks	728	816	896	3.3	3.7	3.9
	22,393	22,409	22,773	100	100	100

households. Many middle peasants, who had a large part of the means of production in their hands, rented additional land and began to employ hired labour. Thus they joined the ranks of kulaks.

In the period from 1924/25 to 1926/27 the percentage of proletarians in the countryside increased from 9.7 to 11.3. The differentiation of peasants, however, did not resemble the stratification of the countryside before the revolution. The number of middle peasants was increasing, and not decreasing as formerly. The above table shows that in two years the number of middle peasant households increased by 600,000.

It was the poor peasants who were affected by "erosion". Some poor peasants joined the ranks of the proletariat, but many of them grew stronger and passed into the category of middle peasants. In the period from 1924/25 to 1926/27 the percentage of poor peasants fell from 25.9 to 22.1. Together with the proletariat they accounted for less than 35 per cent of the rural population.

In the twenties the stratification of peasants and the formation of the bourgeoisie and proletariat in the countryside was opposed by the rising well-being of poor peasants and the ousting of kulaks. The position of poor and middle peasants and the kulaks in economic and political life was reversed. But these categories remained and so the causes of further stratification also hung on. In conditions of commodity production the system of small-scale private economy was spontaneously generating capitalism. The system of

capitalist exploitation of man by man still existed in the countryside; it engendered sharp social conflicts which paved the way for class struggle.

CLASS STRUGGLE

The growth of kulaks during the NEP period inevitably aggravated the situation in the countryside. By the end of the period of rehabilitation the countryside became the scene of sharp conflicts and open class struggle. The village bourgeoisie tried to by-pass the laws which restricted its activities—the laws on land-lease, hired labour and taxation. It attempted to infiltrate the organs of power and Party organisations so as to undermine them and frustrate the implementation of the Party's agrarian policy. Kulaks engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda, spread provocative rumours, organised terror campaigns against officials of Party, Soviet and co-operative organisations, and against collective farmers. In this way they hoped to strike fear into the hearts of poor and middle peasants and draw the peasant masses away from the working class.

The kulaks, who became economically strong, resorted to their first political actions in 1924. On March 28 of that year they killed Grigory Malinovsky, a Communist and village correspondent in Dymovka (Odessa Gubernia), just because he wrote in the newspapers about the distortions in the work of the village organs of power and proved that the corrupted executives were closely linked with the kulaks. At the public trial, which was followed by the whole country, it was proved beyond doubt that the murderers received instruction from the local kulaks.

The Dymovka affair was a conspicuous but typical case of class struggle in the countryside. It is sufficient to say that in the period from March 1924 to August 1925 some 140 village correspondents were assailed by kulaks and 25 of them were murdered.

It is easy to understand why kulaks directed their main blows against village correspondents, i.e., people who brought

to light speculative transactions, kulak arbitrary rule and violations of Soviet laws. Village correspondents were people deeply loyal to the ideals of socialism who fought for justice and truth. They were the best representatives of the awakening, but as yet illiterate and miserly countryside with its strong inclination towards small-scale private ownership.

Kulak terror against Soviet and Party officials was typical of the class struggle in the pre-collectivisation countryside. In 1924 there were 339 terror actions on political grounds; in 1925 there were 902 cases of terror; in 1926—711, and in the first 8 months of 1927—580. The data is incomplete, but it vividly demonstrates that even during NEP the kulaks were irreconcilable and deadly enemies of socialism.

The revolt in a number of rural areas in Georgia, which broke out on August 28, 1924, was an ominous sign of the deteriorating political situation in the countryside. It was staged by Georgian Mensheviks and nationalists who wanted to separate Georgia from the USSR and restore the bourgeois order. Actually, it was suppressed on the following day thanks to the support of Georgian workers and poor peasants. However, the uprising proved that not only rich, but even some middle peasants were dissatisfied with the low prices for agricultural produce and high prices for manufactured goods.

The point was that industry was in the process of reconstruction. Its products were very expensive and further development required a great deal of investment. This led to the so-called scissor prices—soaring of industrial prices and fall of agricultural prices against the pre-war level. Kulaks bitterly attacked the scissor-price policy and frequently they succeeded in fomenting dissatisfaction and vacillations among middle peasants. At the conferences of politically unaffiliated peasants in the autumn of 1924 demands were made for raising the price paid for grain and lowering taxes.

There were signs that ties between the Soviets and the peasant masses were weakening. In the autumn elections to the village and volost Soviets in the Russian Federation in 1924 only 36.9 per cent of eligible peasant voters cast their ballots; in some districts only 19 or 20 per cent took part

in the elections. The kulaks seized the opportunity to infiltrate the local Soviets.

The aggravation of the political situation in the countryside at the end of the period of rehabilitation made it necessary for Party and Soviet organs to radically improve and intensify their work in the countryside, to take steps to strengthen the alliance between the working class and the toiling segments of the peasantry.

"FACE THE VILLAGE!"

The Communist Party was now aware of the dangerous tendencies in the countryside, and in October 1924 the Party's Central Committee plenary meeting adopted a programme of new measures to consolidate economic and political links between town and countryside, to win over the middle peasants and isolate the kulaks, and to consolidate the leading role of the working class and the Communist Party in rural life. The decisions meant that the Party felt it necessary to "face the village"; they were reiterated and further developed in the resolutions of the 14th Party Conference, the Party's 14th Congress, and by the plenary meetings of its Central Committee in 1925 and 1926.

Of decisive importance in the implementation of the "face the village" slogan was the strengthening of economic ties between town and countryside, primarily the development of trade turnover—the principal form of co-operation between the working class and the peasantry. Retail trade in the countryside increased from 2,000 million rubles in 1924/25 and 3,000 million in 1925/26 to 4,100 million rubles in 1926/27. These figures illustrate the expanding links between industry and agriculture in supplying peasants with manufactured goods, as the latter accounted for more than 90 per cent of retail trade in the countryside. Goods shortage continued, however. It was more acute in villages than in towns.

Industry in its underdeveloped state was powerless to satisfy demand, and so it is not surprising that the bulk of

manufactured goods remained in towns. Though the rural market was the largest consumer of goods, it was inadequately supplied. The countryside accounted for 80 per cent of the overall population, but it received only 44 per cent of manufactured goods in 1925/26, and 45.4 per cent in 1926/27. Its share in the consumption of light-industry goods was somewhat higher (48.6 per cent in 1926/27); this was even larger in the consumption of cotton fabrics (58-60 per cent), woollen fabrics (49-50 per cent) and leather-wares (66-67 per cent). According to rough estimates, industry satisfied only a third of rural demand.

The shortage of goods adversely affected the price ratio between manufactured goods and farm produce. Gradually, as the opportunity presented itself, the Party began to abolish the scissor-price policy by reducing prices of manufactured goods. A big step in this direction was taken in 1927. In February of that year the Plenum of the Party's Central Committee decided to reduce by at least 10 per cent retail prices of manufactured goods from June 1, 1927. By that date the retail prices of manufactured goods in the Russian Federation had been decreased by 8.9 per cent. At the same time purchasing prices for some farm products were slightly raised. These measures increased the well-being of the toiling masses in the countryside.

Production of farm machinery and implements was steadily rising. In 1924/25 state industry manufactured 39.9 million rubles' worth of farm machinery and implements; in 1925/26 the figure was 68 million rubles, and in 1926/27—95 million rubles. Imports played an important part in supplying the countryside with new machinery, particularly tractors. The USSR imported 83 million rubles' worth of farm machines in two years. The supply of farm machines and implements was increasing rapidly: from 61.5 million rubles' worth in 1924/25 and 105.9 million in 1925/26 to 125.8 million rubles in 1926/27.

Noting the great importance of new machinery in the reorganisation of agriculture, Lenin believed that the primary condition for success was strict adherence to the class principle in distributing it among peasants. "You must see to it," he wrote, "that farm implements and machines do not remain in the hands of the kulaks and rich peasants. . .

that these machines are not used to enrich the kulaks, but to cultivate their own land."¹ The Communist Party followed a policy strictly in line with Lenin's class principles.

Kulaks who had the necessary cash tried to buy the new machinery and use it to develop and strengthen private entrepreneurship so as to enslave and exploit the toiling masses in the countryside. In 1925/26 they succeeded in buying nearly 40 per cent of the harvesters and 64 per cent of sowing machines in the North Caucasus and Siberia; in the USSR as a whole they bought nearly 25 per cent of the farm machines which were sent to the countryside.

So, additional steps were taken at the end of 1926 to strengthen the class principle in the supply of farm machines and implements. Formerly credits were granted when the peasant bought at least 45 rubles' worth of machines, but according to the new decision credits were to be granted for purchases totalling over 12 rubles. This helped poor and weak households to acquire new machines. Moreover, deposits were decreased, while the repayment period was increased. The decree of December 3, 1926, instructed supply agencies to sell tractors only to collective farms or associations. As a result, the social distribution of farm machinery was improved. In 1926/27 poor peasants in the Russian Federation acquired 28.8 per cent of the aggregate number of machines; middle peasants acquired 52.2 per cent, and kulaks, only 19.6 per cent. In the Ukraine poor and middle peasants purchased more than 85 per cent of the total number of machines (on the eve of World War I, 90 per cent of peasant households in tsarist Russia accounted for only 30 per cent of purchases of machines and equipment).

Agricultural credit was an important means of helping poor and middle peasants and regulating social and economic development in the countryside. The Soviet government allocated 286.9 million rubles for this purpose in 1925/26, and 399.7 million in 1926/27. In these two years more than 1.1 million households received credits for buying draught animals. In 1925/26 credits covered 49.1 per cent of the cost of machines and implements; in 1926/27 they covered 52.5 per cent of the cost.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 515.

To develop and strengthen collective farms, state farms, and poor and middle households certain credits and privileges were granted (extended terms, low interests, etc.). The Party gave particular preference to poor peasants. A special credit fund was established for them in 1926; in October 1927 the fund had 33 million rubles at its disposal. Thanks to these measures most of the credit sums were granted to poor and middle peasants. In 1926/27 poor and weak middle peasants received 33.8 per cent of the credits, middle peasants—56.6 per cent, and kulaks—only 9.6 per cent. The Communist Party used the credits to help poor and middle peasants, free them from usurer exploitation, restrict the sphere of capitalist relations, and consolidate and enhance socialist forms of economy.

Economic links illustrated not only the town's unilateral assistance to the countryside, but also the interconnection and mutual exchange of products.

During the period of rehabilitation the peasantry considerably increased the supply of food to towns and the supply of raw materials to industry. In 1925/26 the state purchased almost 50 per cent more grain and meat than in 1920/21, 350 per cent more oil seeds, nearly 300 per cent more butter, and 1,100 per cent more eggs. A good harvest of grain boosted grain purchases in 1926/27 to 11.6 million tons, i.e., 30.6 per cent more than in 1925/26. True, the production of flax, sunflower, sugar beet and certain other industrial crops was not as high as in the previous year. Thus, even though the prices were not satisfactory, small-scale farming more or less satisfied the country's needs. However, it had only limited potential. The purchases of grain in 1926/27 proved to be the upper limit.

Since the state had increased its allocations for economic and cultural development in town and country, it became necessary to raise the sum of the single tax. In 1925/26 the peasantry paid 252 million rubles in taxes; in the next year they paid 358 million rubles. In conformity with the decisions of the plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee in April 1926, two-thirds of the sum were allocated for local needs, particularly for the needs of the peasantry.

The plenary meeting recommended "a system of taxation which, while alleviating the tax burden on weak peasants,

would at the same time approach as closely as possible the system of income tax". This intensified the class character of taxation in the countryside.

The progression of taxation was strengthened year by year. In 1924/25 poor peasants paid 76 kopeks per head of the family; middle peasants paid 3.09 rubles, and kulaks paid 11.13 rubles. In 1926/27 the poor peasant had to pay only 22 kopeks, the middle peasant—3.13 rubles, and the kulak—15.42 rubles.

Weak peasant households were often partially or completely free from taxes. In 1925/26 some 5.5 million poor peasant households (23.5 per cent of the total number of peasant households) were exempted; in 1926/27 the figure rose to more than 6.7 million (27.6 per cent).

In October 1927, 35 per cent of poor and weak peasant households were exempted from agricultural taxes. The taxation policy helped to increase the number of middle peasants; it was used to restrict and oust the kulak.

The excise on manufactured goods due to the scissor-price policy was conspicuous among the taxes paid by villagers. The gap between the prices for manufactured goods and farm produce was an instance of the application of the theory of value in the interests of building socialism. By raising or reducing the prices for the goods of a particular public sector of production, the Soviet state redistributed the funds in such a way as to ensure high growth rates of industry. The Party adopted a course for the gradual curtailment of the scissor-price policy.

The peasantry's assistance to the working class ensured the creation and swift development of heavy industry and helped to overcome technical and economic backwardness so as to lay the foundations for socialism.

REINVIGORATION OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The "face the village" slogan signified the all-round activation of Soviet social and political organisations to channel the growing activity of the peasantry into the

struggle for socialism and consolidate the alliance of the working class and the peasantry.

The new tasks required the reorganisation of village Party cells; their primary duty was to mobilise village activists, reinvigorate the Soviets and to mobilise the masses of non-Party poor and middle peasants for work in Soviets.

The Party implemented a complex of measures for strengthening its cells in villages. The Party's 14th Conference and 14th Congress instructed that more peasants be enrolled into its ranks. The number of Communists in the countryside—the most backward sector in the construction of socialism—was considerably increased. By the end of 1927 Party cells in the countryside had a membership of 314,000. The number of Party cells and groups of probation members reached 21,700. This was accompanied by the growing influence of Communists amongst the rural population.

New organisational forms and flexible methods of Party work in the countryside were elaborated during the implementation of the ideas embodied in the "face the village" slogan. Party organisations and bureaus of cells began to invite peasants to their open meetings and hearings. They set up standing or temporary committees on different aspects of work in the countryside. Village cells sent Party organisers to different villages and settlements to conduct mass propaganda work among the peasants. This method proved to be effective in view of the shortage of Party cells in villages.

The Soviets were the main vehicles of the Communist Party's policy in the countryside. They directly executed all government decisions. The Soviets were mass political organisations in town and country; they represented the basic form of the political alliance between the working class and the peasantry. Local Soviets were the sole political organisations directly uniting all the working people. The Soviets were particularly important in villages where Party, Komsomol and trade-union organisations were scarce.

In 1926 there were 73,584 village Soviets in the USSR. On average, a village Soviet was responsible for a territory of 4 or 5 kilometres in radius with anything between one and ten settlements having a total of one to three thousand inhabitants. The territory of a Soviet was not an independent

administrative unit. In the countryside such a unit was in most cases represented by the volost, some 14 or 15 kilometres in radius with 10 to 15 village Soviets having a total of anything between 20,000 to 25,000 inhabitants.

As organs of state power, village and volost Soviets conducted great political, social and cultural work. Their activity aimed at developing the peasant economy and its productive forces, defending the rights of the working people and stamping out illiteracy and diseases. The Soviets implemented laws, mobilised the peasants for the management of state affairs, and encouraged the development of socialist forms of economy.

The reinvigoration of Soviets was enhanced by the Party's political measures and the implementation of the ideas underlying the "face the village" slogan.

Another contributory factor in the reinvigoration was the increase in the number of deputies. In 1926 it was decided that one deputy should represent 100 electors, and not 200 as formerly. This doubled the number of activists of village Soviets. Village and volost Soviets began to set up all kinds of sections and commissions (land, finance and taxation, cultural and educational) made up of deputies, active peasants, and representatives of various public, co-operative and economic organisations. At least a million peasants took part in their work in 1925 and 1926.

When the socialist reconstruction was launched, a number of special measures were put into effect to increase the influence of Soviets on village life. Soviets were given the right to have budgets of their own.

On August 24, 1927, the Central Executive Committee and the Soviet government passed a decree on self-taxation of the population which transferred this important source of funds for economic, social and cultural needs from land societies to village Soviets. True, the revenue was not included in the budgets and so the Soviets were obliged to allocate it in strict accordance with the decision of the general meetings of the citizens of the settlement in question (it was the meeting of citizens and not the Soviets that took the decision on self-taxation). However, since the Soviets were responsible for the expenditure of these funds, their role increased in importance.

The economic functions and rights of Soviets were consistently extended. At the end of 1927 they won the right to promulgate rulings on questions of public order, organisation of public services, and protection of state and public property (previously this right was enjoyed only by volost and higher Soviets).

The subordination of land societies to the Soviets was of great importance. The Soviets were instructed to direct the work of land societies and endorse their resolutions on such questions as forms of land tenure, land management schemes and the right to privileges in land management. The Soviets could veto the decisions of land societies if they ran contrary to the law or the instructions of superior bodies, if they contradicted the tasks of collectivisation or violated the interests of the poor.

Agricultural production conferences in village Soviets and volost and district executive committees played a considerable part in the invigoration of the economic and political activity of the toiling peasants. These conferences were attended by specialists, chairmen of collective farms and co-operatives, representatives of land societies and many active peasants, as well as by deputies of the Soviets. The conferences drew up plans for sowing and harvesting campaigns, outlined concrete measures for increasing the area under crops, and improving agricultural techniques (multiple-crop rotation, winnowing of seeds, weeding, etc.), and discussed the supply of machinery and credits, and the organisation of machine-hire stations, co-operatives and collective farms.

In the winter of 1928/29 conferences like these were organised throughout the country. They helped involve the peasants in the communal assessment and solution of problems which formerly they had tackled single-handed. Thus, elements of collectivism were being introduced into the life of the masses of private peasants.

One of the basic tasks faced by the production conferences in 1928 and 1929 was to draw up and put into practice certain basic agronomical measures that could be effected jointly by the peasants. They began with the simplest tasks: mowing of boundaries, road-sides and vacant lots so as to destroy weeds; cleaning and sorting seeds; time-schedules and rules for cultivation were enforced. Later (or straight

away when the conditions allowed) they began to introduce the multiple-field system and winter ploughing. They also organised machine-hire and winnowing stations.

On the eve of collectivisation the political activity of village Soviets was on the upsurge. They mobilised great masses of peasants for the administration of state affairs. In 1927 some 1,315,768 deputies were elected to the village Soviets and 207,121 people were elected to the auditing commissions; the corresponding figures for volost and district Soviets and their auditing commissions were 58,665 and 13,335. Thus, nearly 1.6 million people were elected to the rural organs of power.

More than 3 million peasants were involved in the work of standing commissions, and by the end of 1928 the number had increased to 4 million. Many poor and middle peasants assisted in the work of Soviets. The participation of the masses of peasants in self-government was a prerequisite for improving the work of Soviets in villages.

In the transitional period from capitalism to socialism, at the height of the ruthless class struggle, the law deprived the representatives of the exploiter classes of the right of suffrage. These included "people who use hired labour to make profits, and people who live on unearned income", the ministers of all religious cults, former police employees and agents, gendarmes, secret policemen, former whiteguard officers, etc. During the elections in 1927 nearly 2 million people (3.6 per cent of the population of voting age) were deprived of suffrage rights in the rural areas. The majority of kulaks were not permitted to take part in the elections, but in some places they even succeeded in being elected to the Soviets.

The authority of Soviets grew as a result of the extension of their economic functions, the incorporation of land societies and increased rights in the struggle against the kulaks. The kulaks stepped up their attempts to infiltrate the Soviets. During the election campaign of 1929 the village bourgeoisie launched an all-out propaganda campaign against the policy of the Communist Party, against state and collective farms, and against the programme of industrialisation. The peasants were urged to elect "efficient" people, those who "support the state" by paying taxes, delivering grain, etc.

They intimidated the middle peasants by saying that heavy taxes would be levied from those who bought machines or expanded their economy. Ideas of some sort of abstract equality were spread among the backward peasants. This was based on such saying as: "All are equal, it's time to discard the word 'kulak', because there are no kulaks, all are toilers." In their desperate struggle to prevent the election of poor peasants, seasonal farmhands, Communists and Komsomol members to the Soviets, the kulaks resorted to bribery, blackmail, violence and murder.

The Communist Party launched a broad organisational and explanatory campaign, it isolated the kulaks politically and consolidated the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. Meetings were held throughout the country during which Communists explained the situation and the policy of the Soviet government; the peasants discussed the candidates and drew up mandates.

The elections to the Soviets in 1929 demonstrated a considerable rise in the political activity of peasants; there was a turn-out of 61.7 per cent of eligible voters (13.3 per cent more than in 1927); 4.1 per cent of the adult population (against 3.6 per cent in 1927) were deprived of the right to vote. A total of 1,447,928 deputies were elected to the village Soviets, an increase of 131,400 over the 1927 figure. Major changes took place in the composition of the deputies. The proportion of workers and seasonal farmhands increased from 5 to 8.7 per cent; that of delegates representing poor peasants increased from 34 to 46 per cent, thus coming up towards the percentage of representatives of middle peasants. The proportion of prosperous middle peasants dropped from 7.7 to 5.9 per cent.

The Communist Party and the Soviet government relied on poor peasants at all stages of the battle for socialism—during the revolutionary struggle and during the years of peaceful work. It was, therefore, exceptionally important to raise the role of poor peasants in the solution of all principal problems of village life. In May 1926 the Organisational Bureau of the Communist Party adopted a decision on work among peasants. The decision stated that the most efficient forms of work were meetings of the poor and inauguration of special groups of the poor

in Soviets, co-operatives and peasant mutual-aid societies, so as to "ensure better organisational protection of the interests of weak segments in the work of these organisations".

The inauguration of special political organisations of the poor was of tremendous significance. They had the task of consolidating the political unity of peasants, protecting their interests and freeing them from the influence of exploiters.

Organisations of the poor were first inaugurated in village Soviets, co-operatives and peasant mutual-aid societies in 1926, and the process was intensified on the eve of collectivisation. They were conspicuous in the struggle against kulaks and class distortions in the work of Soviets and other organisations. They registered kulak households, imposed taxes on them, exposed and purged kulaks from Soviets and collective farms, abolished false co-operatives, and frequently initiated and organised collective farms and machine, land melioration and sowing associations. The organisations helped poor peasants to cultivate land and to acquire credits.

The consolidation of village Soviets and greater political activity of toiling peasants were prerequisites for socialist re-organisation of agriculture, defeat of kulak opposition, and for the rallying of millions of poor and middle peasants around the working class and the Communist Party. During the bitter class struggle which developed in the countryside at the end of the 1920s, the toiling peasants opposed the kulaks with more stamina, organisational skill and greater unity, relying on the support of the working class.

"GRAIN STRIKE". AGGRAVATION OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The principal issue in the class struggle in the period 1928-1929 was grain purchases. The "grain strike" provoked by the kulaks made the situation in the villages, and the country as a whole, extremely tense, and it endangered the rates of industrialisation and the building of socialism. The

grain issue once again became of primary importance in the struggle for socialism; once again it compelled the Party to mobilise all forces for an onslaught against the kulaks and for the unification of the masses of poor and middle peasants. In the period from December 1927 to February 1928 the Party's Central Committee issued directives enumerating economic, political and organisational measures to end the crisis in grain purchases. According to rough estimates, more than 4,000 officials from territorial, gubernia and regional organisations, and nearly 26,000 officials from district and volost organisations were sent to villages. This 30,000-strong army of Communists helped primary Party organisations fight the kulak sabotage of state purchases.

The working class resolutely supported the Party's policy of grain purchases. Industrial enterprises stepped up production of goods required in the countryside. In many instances workers and office employees decided to reduce consumption of deficit goods so that the Party would be in a better position to supply the countryside during the purchase campaign. Some 133 teams numbering a total of 1,546 workers were sent to grain-producing districts. They helped village Party cells and the poor fight kulak sabotage, took part in the harvesting campaign, and participated in organisational and explanatory work.

The Party's Central Committee demanded that the local organisations collect taxes strictly on time, and that they undeviatingly implement the law of self-taxation of the rural population. The supply of manufactured goods to the countryside was improved.

Extraordinary measures were taken against kulaks and profiteers and to curb the "grain strike". In January 1928 Article 107 of the Criminal Code was applied to kulaks who refused to deliver grain at state prices, and to grain speculators. This article sanctioned court proceedings against profiteers and the confiscation of their stocks, 25 per cent of which were to be distributed on long-term credit or even free among poor peasants (this concerned mainly seeds and, if necessary, grain for consumption).

The extraordinary measures did not mean that NEP was abolished, since they did not affect the masses of peasants. Nor did they mean full dispossession of kulaks, since only

surplus grain and those means of production which the kulak employed most effectively for enslaving and exploiting the peasants were subject to confiscation. The clauses of the Criminal Code which envisaged penalties for profiteering were applied only to the organisers of the "grain strike" and those who had grain stocks but refused to sell them to the state. In some households 160 to 240 tons of grain were confiscated. In the first six months of 1928 a total of 2.4 million tons of grain were confiscated from kulak and well-to-do households.

The purchase campaign had reached a turning-point. From January to March 1928 some 1.8 million tons more grain were purchased than during the same period in the previous year. Thus, the deficit which appeared at the beginning of the year was nearly completely wiped out.

It was impossible to lift the extraordinary measures altogether. In the winter of 1929 the kulak resistance increased though the purchasing prices for grain were somewhat raised, and so the state had to resume coercive measures. During the purchase campaign of 1928-29 public pressure from poor and middle peasants was organised against the kulaks; in some places the purchases followed the pattern of self-taxation. In Siberia, the Urals and then in other areas the peasants themselves fixed quotas for delivering grain to the state according to the real potential of each household. The poor and middle peasants actively participated in the organisation of purchases and did not allow kulak and prosperous elements to cheat the state agencies and market grain at speculative prices. At the same time they saw to it that quotas for middle and poor peasants were reasonable.

Experience had shown that the poor and middle peasants had to be mobilised for the struggle against kulaks in grain purchase campaigns. Village Soviets were allowed to liquidate those kulak households which offered the most bitter resistance. This was still not the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, but it was a prologue to the dispossession of kulaks.

The kulaks suffered a decisive defeat in grain purchases and surrendered one position after another as a result of state restrictive measures. So the ferocity of their resistance

increased, and they adopted terrorist methods against the representatives of Soviet power, Party and Soviet executives, and poor and middle peasants. In 1927 the press reported 700 kulak acts of terror; in the eleven months of 1928 there were 1,027 acts of terror, 140 of which were murders. Actually, the scope of kulak terror was much greater. In 1928 and 1929 the victims of terror were those people who were actually involved in the onslaught against the kulaks—organisers of collective farms, land surveyors, etc. In 1928, 48.7 per cent of the victims of kulak terror were junior officials of Soviets, 24.8 per cent were activists from among poor peasants, 24.7 per cent were employees of collective farms, land, purchasing and financial agencies, and executives of Party organisations, and 1.8 per cent were village correspondents. Few of the victims were members of the Communist Party (about 19 per cent).

Individual terror was accompanied by group and collective actions of kulaks against collective farms and activists from the ranks of poor and middle peasants.

In the spring of 1929 kulak terror was intensified due to the worsening of the situation in the purchasing campaign. Some regional and territorial Party committees instructed Soviet organs of power to expel kulak counter-revolutionary elements (people guilty of crimes, instigators of anti-Soviet acts, etc.).

Strikes by seasonal farmhands against their kulak masters were one of the most effective weapons in the class struggle. Such strikes had taken place long before 1929, but then they were isolated and disorganised. In 1929 the strikes involved whole districts. They were caused by bad living and working conditions in kulak households, violations of labour laws and unbearable housing conditions.

These strikes were marked by a high level of organisation and mutual assistance; in many instances they were directed by Party and trade-union organisations. Most of the strikes ended in victory for farmhands, the kulaks being compelled to meet their demands. The strikes of 1929 revealed that kulaks were isolated; they were a precursor of the liquidation of kulaks as a class.

The aggravation of the class struggle in the countryside was indicative of the deep differentiation among the peas-

ants; it showed that poor and middle peasants were becoming more deeply involved in the struggle against kulaks and the capitalist road of development in agriculture. As Lenin predicted, NEP not only gave a boost to the economy, but consolidated the alliance between the working class and the peasantry; it paved the way for the socialist reorganisation of agriculture.

III. AGRARIAN REFORMS IN THE SOVIET EASTERN REPUBLICS

COTTON-GROWING REGIONS

The social and economic developments in the countryside were typical of those taking place over the greater part of the country. The bourgeois relations which took shape before the October Revolution involved 100 or 105 million (80-85 per cent) people in the countryside.

However, the social and economic development of the peasantry was of a different nature in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, Daghestan, the autonomous republics of North Caucasus, Buryat-Mongolia and Yakutia which together had a total population of only 18 million¹. They stood at different levels of social and economic development, but in agriculture patriarchal and feudal relations were predominant. It so happened that precisely this group of peoples by-passed the capitalist stage of development on the road from feudalism to socialism.

Uzbekistan was the most economically developed region in Central Asia, the outlying territory of tsarist Russia. Its cotton had a wide market, and consequently it attracted bank and trade capital. Capitalist relations, however, were

¹ The small peoples in the North, Siberia and in the Far East constituted a special group. The Khakasses, Evenks, Chukchi, Koryaks, Nentsi and others numbered about 250,000 in 1926. They retained at that time the principal features of the tribal system.

closely intertwined with feudal ones, though the latter were losing ground. Manpower exploited by owners of cotton plantations comprised 35 to 40 per cent of day workers and farmhands, and 60 to 65 per cent of métayers. Only part of the land on estates was used for large-scale production based on hired labour, most of it being leased to métayers.

The social and economic system in the Uzbek countryside was not immediately affected by the October Revolution. The masses of peasants were not prepared for the changes. The feudal and capitalist elements retained their land until the middle of the twenties, while the majority of toilers had little or no land at all.

The land survey of 1924/25 revealed that in Tashkent Region, for instance, 12.5 per cent of peasant households had no land at all; 18.1 per cent had lots of less than one hectare; and 30.3 per cent from one to three hectares. All these households made use of only 20.1 per cent of the available land. At the other extreme, farmsteads with more than ten hectares (they constituted only 5 per cent of the total number of peasant households) owned 24.9 per cent of the available land. The gap was striking: 132 landlords owned 12,000 hectares, while 19,880 peasant households with less than one hectare each owned 5,900 hectares.

The village poor with miserly lots of land, and with no draught animals or ploughing implements were enslaved by feudalistic elements who turned them into métayers, day labourers or regular farmhands.

Extraction of métayage was the most widespread method used by the landlords to run their plantations and exploit the peasants. Amongst the total of 481 landlord farms (which were subsequently abolished by the land and water reform of 1925 and 1926), 68.2 per cent of the crop area was cultivated by métayers; 12.7 per cent was leased for cash payments; and 19.1 per cent was cultivated by day labourers and farmhands.

The terms of métayage were exceptionally harsh. The landowner (landlord or merchant) leased the ploughlands, and lent cattle and seeds in return for three-fifths or three quarters of the total harvest.

Until the middle of the 1920s, the feudal forms of production relations were retained and even dominated Cen-

tral Asian agriculture. Bourgeois methods of economy (cash rent, exploitation of hired labour) also existed, but they were inferior to the feudal forms. In fact, they supplemented the feudal forms and were interrelated with them. Moreover, tribal relations and age-long traditions were strong. The landlord was frequently the tribal elder, benefactor and spiritual instructor for the poor peasants. The patriarchal relations camouflaged the ruthless exploitation that was actually taking place.

The sector-household land tenure characterised by miserly lots assigned to each household was widespread in the cotton-growing regions of Central Asia. The peasants were unable to cultivate solely by their own efforts such a labour-consuming plant as cotton. According to the data covering the period from 1924 to 1926, the average lot of a peasant was in the whereabouts of two to three hectares, but even these small lots were divided up into still smaller portions.

The fragmentation mostly depended on the state of the local irrigational system which consisted of numerous small ditches that could not give a regular supply of water to the fields. Here, communal customs had only survived as far as the consumption of water was concerned. The irrigation system required great expenditure of labour of all peasants. The labour for the maintenance of the irrigation ditches was distributed according to communal principles. However, since the social system was patriarchal and feudal in character, the irrigational work was directed by landlords.

NOMAD REGIONS

The most archaic forms of farming were retained by the nomads of Kazakhstan, Kirghizia and Turkmenia. The majority of the population there led a nomadic life: 567,000 (70.1 per cent) of the total of 809,000 Kazakh households in 1928.

Nomad communities are very conservative, their economic and social forms stagnant. They retain for many centuries

the customs, rules and traditions which other peoples have long since discarded. Right up to collectivisation, the nomads of Kazakhstan and Central Asia retained the tribal organisation in which the principal unit was the nomadic community.

The primary social and economic unit of nomads was the village, which consisted either of a large patriarchal family (father, married or unmarried sons, grandchildren) or a group of kindred families (from 5 to 15) with a common ancestor. The village was governed by the elder who enjoyed autocratic rights. Some villages were very large, consisting of 40 to 100 households belonging to two or three tribes, but they also were based on the patriarchal family or a group of kindred families.

Cattle, ploughlands and pasturelands were in the common ownership of the family community. Even when it disintegrated into a group of kindred families, each with its own cattle, ploughlands and other property, many elements of the common economy were retained due to the organisation of nomad animal husbandry and tribal traditions. The landlords used this communal economy to mercilessly exploit their "relations" who fell into poverty.

A group of self-sufficient villages merged into an administrative village of 100 to 200 and even 500 households, which owned a definite territory of seasonal pasturelands, sometimes extending for more than 700 kilometres. It was precisely the administrative village which constituted the community in its true sense and which collectively used the pasturelands for grazing cattle. The boundaries of the nomad community were not fixed precisely. The winter sites for each self-sufficient and administrative village were strictly fixed because they were connected with the tribal "haunts", but the summer pasturelands, often hundreds of kilometres away, were used jointly by many communities and even whole districts.

Stable social strata had long been in evidence in nomad communities. These comprised the landlord upper crust, which exploited the masses of the people in the community by patriarchal and feudal methods; the dependent members of the community, who suffered most from the exploitation, and the so-called middle strata—families of producers

who were engaged in simple reproduction by their own efforts.

The dualism (common ownership—private use), so typical of neighbour village communities, was also manifested in the nomad community: though cattle and means of production were privately owned, the land was used according to the number of cattle owned by the member of the community. The communal use of land afforded the upper crust an opportunity to increase the size of its herds almost without limit; similarly, the community of the village economic life and the tribal institutions provided the landlords with an increasing amount of labour which they could exploit in their own interest. The concentration of hay-fields and ploughlands (they had already begun to acquire economic importance in semi-nomadic villages) in the hands of landlords, and the widespread practice of leasing communal lands (the rent also being pocketed by landlords) were signs of the class nature of the infrastructure of the communities. The tribal relations and institutions, however, were not simply vestiges of the past which camouflaged the new system of relations. They permeated all aspects of village life, including farming and family relations.

Relations in production, the organisation of production itself, and the village's social and economic development in general were directly influenced by the strict subordination to the elders in the tribe, the system of tribal mutual assistance, sureties, loyalty to the tribe, alienation of strangers and the abject position of women. The tribal ideology and above all the deep conviction that all tribesmen were equal and that they all had common interests was a great obstacle in the differentiation of the class forces; it gave landlords the opportunity to kindle the flames of tribal enmity and to hold in submission the poor tribesmen whom they exploited.

The influence of tribal and communal relations and institutions and oppression by the upper crust were so strong in the Kazakh and Kirghizian countryside that it was impossible to implement anti-feudal agrarian reforms in the course of the October Revolution, as was the case in more developed areas of the country. It took time for class antagonism to shatter the patriarchal system. The extremely

uneven distribution of the means of production remained even after the October Revolution; landlords continued to dominate in the nomad economy. The concentration of cattle in the hands of landlords was the material foundation for their domination and for the patriarchal feudal forms of exploitation.

The Soviet state gave considerable material aid to the poorest segments of the rural population, so in the nomad villages, too, some of the poor were joining the ranks of middle peasants. But the poor still constituted the absolute majority. In Kazakhstan, for instance, the proportion of households with less than five head of cattle was 75 per cent in 1924/25, and 67 per cent in 1925/26.

Even in the spring of 1928, when the ploughlands and pasturelands in Kazakhstan were redistributed, 50.1 per cent of poor households (possessing less than 5 head of cattle each), owning 13.5 per cent of the total livestock population, were exploited by wealthy cattle-breeders. At the other extreme, 6.1 per cent of the total number of households owned more than 25 head of cattle each; they possessed 33.8 per cent of the total number of cattle. Some landlords had 500-800 and more head of cattle.

The ploughlands and hay-fields at wintering places which belonged to landlords were cultivated by farmhands or associations—a peculiar form of *métayage* under which the landlord and the *métayer* jointly cultivated land: the first provided the seeds, livestock and implements, while the second provided his labour. Officially, the harvest was divided equally, but actually the landlord took the greater part. Hired labour, though long used by the landlords, was not the principal form of exploitation.

A rich landlord usually employed 10 to 20 farmhands and 50 to 100 semi-serfs who had few, if any, cattle and who fully depended on the landlord, worked for him and roamed the pasturelands with him. The households which constituted the village tended grazing cattle in turn, irrespective of the number of head owned by the household.

There were many other forms of dependence and semi-feudal exploitation. Sometimes the landlord would lend his cattle to the poor or agree to tend the cattle of those who had no opportunity to leave for the pasturelands. The pay

was exacted in labour duties. These and similar forms of pre-capitalist exploitation were masked by tribal traditions. The landlord was the senior in the kinship; he was the protector of his poor vassals who were obliged to carry out many duties for their elder and who worked for him for miserly recompense. The feudal payments by work were disguised as "kinship assistance", "gratitude", "presents" and other traditional duties.

The landlords took advantage of the traditions, popularised ideas of the unity of all members of the tribe, the community of their interests, obsolete norms of conduct, and the nomadic way of life.

LAND AND WATER REFORMS IN THE EARLY TWENTIES. ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET POWER IN VILLAGES

During the October Revolution, land in the former colonial outlying territories was only confiscated from members of the tsar's family, officials, major feudal lords, and industrial and merchant companies. The nationalised estates were used to set up state farms or were handed over to collective farms and individual peasants. However, the native population was not prepared to confiscate the farms of their own feudal lords.

Following the end of the Civil War, the land and water reform undertaken in 1921-1922 equalised the actual land tenure (and also the water consumption) by Russian and local peasants. The aims of the reform were clearly defined in the decision of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party which was adopted on June 22, 1920, and which was prepared by Lenin: "... 1) equalise land tenure by Russians, newcomers and local inhabitants; 2) rout, expel, and subordinate Russian kulaks in a most vigorous way." The reform was anti-colonial in character. Excess land (over the labour norm), some cattle and implements were taken away from migrants and distributed among the poorest sections of the

native peasants. Migrant settlements, which sprang up spontaneously after 1916, were wiped out and so were the old settlements which were detrimental to the economic interests of the local population (those which were located on cattle trails, near the major irrigation canals, etc.).

The reform covered a number of regions in the East. In Turkestan it was implemented in Semirechye Region, and in some districts of Ferghana and Syr-Darya regions. As a result, 232,800 hectares of land were distributed among 9,755 Kirghizian and Kazakh, 3,017 Uzbek and 54 Russian households. In 1922 the native population was given 48,700 hectares of Russian kulak land in Turkestan. At the same time the Kazakhs regained millions of hectares of land seized by Cossacks.

The reform hardly affected the estates of local exploiters. It liquidated only those landlord economies which had turned into capitalist enterprises and which severed ties with the communities. In Uzbekistan, for instance, the reduction of the numbers of poor peasants and the growth of middle peasants was accompanied by an increase in the numbers of prosperous peasants. In Kazakhstan and Kirghizia, the landlords actually utilised the confiscated lands which were handed over to the nomad or semi-nomad population for communal use. However, the reform proved to the toilers of the former outskirts of Russia that the struggle against the exploiters and oppressors in the Soviet state was possible and that the liquidation of feudal estates was a prerequisite for improving peasant economy.

The reinvigoration of Soviets in 1925-1927 was of great importance for the social development of villages. This reinvigoration helped purge the Soviets of landlord and kulak elements and it stirred the class consciousness of the broad masses of national peasantry.

In the beginning, the village Soviets were under the strong influence of landlords. Tribal connections and traditions helped landlords to infiltrate the Soviets or to control their activities. The elections to the village Soviets were conducted in an atmosphere of sharp tribal struggle which diverted attention and energy away from the class struggle.

The spread of Soviet influence in villages meant systematic mass political and organisational work for

ousting landlord elements, and for turning the Soviets into genuine organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat—organs of power of the working people. The success of Soviet ideas in villages was a heavy blow to such tribal institutions as obedience to landlords, unity and surety. The working people became conscious of their class interests; actual economic and class relations and connections came to the fore. It took many years of hard work by Party and Soviet organisations to win over the villages for the Soviets, but by 1926 the influence of landlords during the elections to the Soviets had been undermined.

LAND AND WATER REFORMS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 1920s

The estates and economies of the feudal upper crust were abolished and the agrarian reform undertaken only after great work in the political organisation and education of the working masses of the national peasantry, in liberating them from the economic and spiritual yoke of the landlords and the clergy, and in exposing and ousting the exploiter elements.

The foundation of the land and water reform in Uzbekistan was laid by the republican government's decrees on the nationalisation of land and water and on land and water reform which were adopted on December 2, 1925. A little earlier, on September 24, similar decrees were adopted in Turkmenia. In 1927-1928 the reform was implemented in the southern agricultural areas of Kirghizia. On the main territory of Tajikistan it was implemented during the all-out collectivisation campaign.

In the course of the reform ploughlands were confiscated from landlords and distributed among the peasants. Cattle and implements were also confiscated.

Land owned by merchants and other people who derived unearned incomes and who did not cultivate land "by their own efforts or by the efforts of their families" was confis-

cated fully, irrespective of the size of holdings. Their cattle and implements were also confiscated or compulsorily purchased by the state. Households which cultivated land "fully or partially by their own efforts" were deprived of land which exceeded the quotas of land tenure in the given locality. Surplus implements also had to be sold to the state.

The reform was fiercely opposed by the landlords, the clergy and kulak elements. Basmaches (counter-revolutionaries in Central Asia) once again raised their heads. The class enemies terrorised Party and Soviet executives, and made savage reprisals on peasants who actively supported the reform. However, times had changed. The peasants welcomed the reform and rallied around the Soviet government.

The reform was widely discussed by peasants, Communists and government officials. Land commissions consisting of Communists, Soviet officials and representatives of land agencies were set up in all regions and districts. Committees of toiling peasants were created in each village to assist them. More than 1,500 Party and Soviet executives, agricultural specialists and land surveyors were sent to the countryside.

With the reform of 1926-1929 6,763 farms belonging to landlords, the clergy and merchants were liquidated. Excess land was expropriated from 37,759 landlord and kulak estates. The reform abolished most of the landed estates in Central Asia and undermined the economic foundation of feudalism and pre-capitalist forms of exploitation. At the same time, the reform was a heavy blow to kulaks.

More than 300,000 hectares of land came into the state fund. This was almost wholly distributed among the peasants. In addition to land, 123,418 small farmsteads received farm implements, credits in seeds and foodstuffs, and considerable financial aid. The organs of Soviet power were put in charge of the distribution of water.

Just as in the central regions of Russia, the distribution of confiscated feudal land helped the poor peasants to enter the class of middle peasants. In Samarkand, Ferghana and Tashkent regions, 40.9 per cent of the 50,803 households which received land were landless before the reform; 16.9 per cent had only farmsteads, and 42.2 per cent were poor

in land. After the reform there were no landless peasants. The number of households with less than 0.5 hectares was reduced from 32.7 per cent to 2.5 per cent; those with less than one hectare from 13.4 to 8.5 per cent. The middle groups were greatly enlarged. The number of households with one to two hectares increased from 9.4 to 29.5 per cent; with two to three hectares from 2.5 to 28.6 per cent; and with more than three hectares from 1.1 to 30.9 per cent.

The growth of the middle group signified the growth of the small-commodity mode of production. But the class stratification was not destroyed, the exploiter elements were still there. The system of economy which resulted from the reform inevitably gave birth to capitalism and to a new class stratification typical of the bourgeois system. It was quite logical that the hiring of draught animals developed among the peasants. In Samarkand, Ferghana and Tashkent regions only 7.1 per cent of the households which received land were hiring draught animals before the reform, as against 15.1 per cent after the reform. Before the reform labour (day, seasonal or piece-work farmhands) was hired by 13.8 per cent of the households; in 1926 and 1927 the figure was 27.1 per cent. But migration of own manpower fell sharply. The number of hired farmhands and métayers dropped from 59-60 to 10-11 per cent.

There were notable changes in the rent system. The peasants who received land naturally stopped leasing land from others. Before the reform land was rented by 42.5 per cent of households; after the reform by only 5.7 per cent. The proportion of households which leased land to others rose from 0.24 to 1.87 per cent.

In addition to land, peasants in Uzbekistan and Turkmenia received implements and credits in cash and seeds.

The main result of the reform was the abolition of feudal forms of exploitation, primarily of métayage; the peasant was becoming a small-commodity producer. The reform resembled the first stage of the agrarian revolution in the central regions of Russia. The most important consequence was the expansion of the group of middle peasants.

The land and water reform in Central Asia was implemented at a time when the foundation was being laid for socialist reconstruction of the economy and it, therefore,

went beyond bourgeois-democratic tasks. Anti-feudal transformations intertwined with socialist measures proper. The reform dealt a heavy blow to the kulak elements, and it stimulated the growth of collective farms and co-operatives. In Ferghana, Samarkand and Tashkent regions there were only 46 collective farms before the reform, but in the period from December 1925 to May 1926 their number increased by 364.

The land and water reform of the second half of the 1920s in the republics of the Soviet East was a prerequisite for the socialist reorganisation of agriculture and a great step forward for the former colonial outlying territories from a patriarchal feudal system to socialism, by-passing the capitalist stage of development.

RE-ALLOTMENT OF PLOUGHLANDS AND PASTURES AND THE LIQUIDATION OF SEMI-FEUDAL LORDS IN KAZAKHSTAN

Measures which were similar in content but specific in form were taken in republics with nomadic modes of cattle-breeding to eliminate the feudal and patriarchal forms of exploitation. Since even after the October Revolution vast tracts of meadowland, ploughland and pastureland still remained in the hands of the landlords in Kazakhstan, the holdings were re-allotted in 1926-1927.

The egalitarian re-allotment (according to the number of mouths to feed) was designed to hand over landlords' lands to the Kazakh toilers and to undermine the foundation of feudal exploitation. It was a revolutionary reform similar to the first stage of the agrarian revolution in the more developed regions of the country.

Poor peasants received 66.3 per cent of ploughland and 61.6 per cent of meadowland; middle peasants received 26.2 and 29.8 per cent, respectively. Landlords retained only 7.5 per cent of ploughland and 8.6 per cent of meadowland; 1,360,000 hectares of meadowland and 1,250,000 hectares of ploughland were taken away from landlords

and wealthy peasants and handed over to poor and middle peasants.

The feudal and landlord economies were not abolished completely because the Kazakh population was too backward and the class self-consciousness of the toiling masses was not sufficiently developed. The Communist Party had to carry out great organisational and explanatory work in the Kazakh countryside and to overcome great difficulties engendered by the patriarchal system and the kindred links of landlord families with the families of poor and middle peasants whom they exploited. There were in addition other difficulties caused by inter-tribal enmity, etc.

The re-allotment of land stimulated the class struggle in the countryside and was a prerequisite for the elimination of feudal and landlord elements. It undermined the foundation of the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation but did not eliminate them since the feudal and landlord economies were retained. In nomadic and semi-nomadic districts the landlords still owned large herds of cattle.

The urgent task was to eliminate the major cattle-breeding households which constituted the principal social base for the feudal and patriarchal system in Kazakh villages. On August 27 the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Kazakh Autonomous Republic promulgated a law on the confiscation of landlord households on the republic's territory (this did not include the cotton-producing and most backward cattle-breeding areas). The law envisaged "the expulsion of those of the major cattle-breeders from the native population who counteract the spread of Soviet influence in villages by their semi-feudal, patriarchal and tribal relations and by the influence they exercise by virtue of their property and social status". The law added that "all their property directly or indirectly connected with agriculture is subject to confiscation with the exception of the minimum number of cattle and farm implements required for farming". In nomad regions the expulsion concerned owners of 400 head of cattle, and in semi-nomad regions, owners of 300 head of cattle, and also the descendants of sultans and khans, "and lifelong volost administrators who received special awards from the former tsarist government", even if their property

was smaller than that indicated in the law. Of great importance was the cancellation of debts to the landlord farms which were subject to confiscation. The expelled persons were left a minimum of cattle and implements and were given the "right to get land within the limits of labour quotas" in those parts of Kazakhstan "where formerly these persons had no holdings of their own".

The law said that "the greater part (60-70 per cent) of the confiscated property was to be given over to the poorest peasants of the native population so as to strengthen them" and that "measures should be taken for their collectivisation". The rest was to be given over to collective and state farms; pedigree cattle was to be given over to pedigree farms and agricultural educational establishments. "The most organised farms of the expelled cattle-breeders," the law said, "must be used for setting up collective farms; the farmhands and poor peasants who worked previously on such farms must be drawn into work in the collective farms."

On September 5 the Central Executive Committee of Kazakhstan released an appeal to all the working people in the republic, while the Party's Territorial Committee addressed a letter to all Party cells in the villages. These explained that the confiscation was aimed at eliminating Kazakh semi-feudalism, but that it did not signify dispossession of the kulaks, nor was it directed against landlord and kulak-type economies.

By the end of November 1928 the major landlords were expelled; nearly 700 farms were liquidated and about 145,000 head of cattle confiscated. Part of the confiscated herd was used to pay the wages of farmhands and poor peasants who worked on the confiscated farms, while another part, mostly pedigree cattle, was given over to state farms and land agencies; 84,600 head of cattle were distributed among 24,500 poor and middle peasants. Cattleless households received 18.2 per cent of the distributed cattle; households which had one head of cattle, received 20.2 per cent; two head—22.3 per cent; three head—17.4 per cent; four head—11.5 per cent; and five head—5.3 per cent. Cattleless households in non-nomadic areas received one head of cattle for each member of the family, but not more

than five per household; in semi-nomadic areas two head of cattle for each member of the family, but not more than eight per household; and in nomadic areas three head per member of the family, but not more than 12 per household. The norms were reduced for those who had less than five head of cattle in non-nomadic regions; less than eight in semi-nomadic regions, and less than 12 in nomadic regions.

The egalitarian distribution of cattle turned some poor peasant households into middle peasant households; it helped them to become small-commodity producers. At least 3 to 4 (but not more than 7 or 8) per cent of poor Kazakh households entered the category of middle peasants. The abolition of major cattle-breeding economies contributed to a certain extent to the development of the socialist system of production in Kazakh villages. Nearly 30,000 head of cattle were handed over to the existing 988 Kazakh collective farms; 292 new collective farms, amalgamating 3,000-5,000 village households (1-1.5 per cent), made their appearance.

The land and water reform, the re-allotment of ploughland and meadowland, and the elimination of major cattle-breeding economies did not signify as yet socialist reorganisation of agriculture in the Soviet Eastern republics. However, they created the social, economic and political prerequisites for such a reorganisation. Moreover, they weakened the positions of the exploiter elements, ruined the feudal and patriarchal system of relations, and raised the living and education standard of the poor sections of the native population. Class relations and stratification replaced tribal relations and segregation wherever the reorganisations were executed. Social antagonism was bursting out through the patriarchal membrane.

In the general onslaught against the remnants of the old social forces, a particularly important part was played by the offensive against the rural bourgeoisie—the most numerous exploiter class in the country after the October Revolution. This was the front of the principal class battles against the kulaks and landlords. As a result, the exploiter elements were ousted from most of economic positions in the countryside, and were soon politically isolated.

During the bitter struggle against the kulaks, the Communist Party fought for the class consolidation of poor and middle strata of the rural population; it rallied them around the working class, and strengthened their political organisation and activity. The class antagonism of the toiling peasants and the kulaks became clearly discernible. The peasantry was gathering strength for the decisive struggle against the exploiters and for building a new life.

SOCIALIST REORGANISATION OF AGRICULTURE

I. PREREQUISITES FOR SOCIALISM IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

LENIN'S CO-OPERATIVE PLAN

The prerequisites for the socialist road of development in the countryside were created in the early years of Soviet power. The most essential political prerequisite was the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat is state power which consciously and in a planned manner reorganises the whole of society along socialist lines. The nationalisation of land socialised the ownership of the principal means of agricultural production and was, therefore, a major step forward towards the collective use of land. The agrarian system which was founded on nationalisation afforded the Soviet state the opportunity of effectively influencing the development of the countryside, regulating the social and economic processes and channeling them into socialism. Industrialisation ensured the technical reconstruction of agriculture and the creation of the material base for the socialisation of peasant labour. The cultural revolution imbued the peasants with the ideas of socialism, helped them understand the advantages of collective labour, and master new machines, agronomy and the organisation of large-scale production. Finally, the great progress made by co-operatives created the organisational, economic and psychological prerequisites for collectivisation.

Many obstacles stood in the way of socialist reorganisation of millions of small peasant households.

History had taught the peasants that the source of sustenance lay in their small farms and in their own labour. Before the victory of socialism, all work for others was work for exploiters. Large-scale production was the source of oppression and ruin for the peasant. So the peasants regarded large-scale production with apprehension. They quite naturally stuck to their small plots of land. The transition to socialist forms of economy was, they believed, tantamount to a radical revolution in their way of life which would sweep away age-long economic habits, and the customs, ideas and attitudes which their forefathers had handed down. Peasants had to be convinced that public forms of large-scale economy were more profitable than small-scale production. Having implemented Lenin's co-operative plan, the Communist Party and the Soviet state solved this complex problem.

Lenin pointed out that in a country such as Russia where the peasant population predominated, the dictatorship of the proletariat was confronted by the exceptionally complicated task of directing the transition of "small proprietors to socialised and collective work",¹ and that socialist reorganisation of agricultural relations was "of the utmost importance to our country".²

In posing this great task, Lenin proved scientifically the economic need to make the transition to large-scale and collective farming in the countryside. After the October Revolution, he said, the peasants "considerably improved the exploitation of the soil, raising it to a level above the average. It goes without saying, however, that we could not achieve everything we would have wished in this respect, for it would take tremendous funds to provide each with sufficient seed, livestock and implements as long as the land is tilled by individual peasants... to supply each small peasant with sufficient means of production is impossible and most irrational since it would mean a terrible fragmentation of resources; only joint, artel, co-operative labour can help us to emerge from the blind alley in which the imperialist war has driven us."³

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 186.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 28, p. 338.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 30, p. 144.

However, besides substantiating the need for the transition, it was necessary to outline concrete plans for it so that millions of peasants would be convinced of the need for such a transition to be effected with their own hands. Socialism in the countryside had to be built "by a series of gradual, preliminary stages"¹, by a number of transitional steps which could be taken by the peasant, and by "making concessions in selecting ways of carrying out socialist reforms".²

To bring tens of millions of people to communism, Lenin said, it was necessary "on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles... to work in this small-peasant country to build solid gangways to socialism".³ Co-operation was precisely such a gangway which led to large-scale, collective and socialised farming. Co-operatives were valuable because they mobilised all the peasants for the practical construction of socialism, without forcing them to discard the "private trade interest"; it combined the private interests of peasants with control by the proletarian state, subordinating the private to the common interest. Here, as Lenin saw it, lay the tremendous significance of co-operatives.

In the Soviet Union where the means of production and land belonged to the dictatorship of the proletariat and where there was a strong alliance between the working class and the peasantry the co-operatives, Lenin said, represented all that was necessary for building socialism since they guaranteed "the transition to the new system by means that are the *simplest, easiest and most acceptable to the peasant*".⁴

THE BEGINNING OF TECHNICAL RECONSTRUCTION

Certain prerequisites had to be created for the socialist reorganisation of agriculture and for uniting on a voluntary basis millions of small peasant households. This, as

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 342.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 117.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 33, p. 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 468.

Lenin said, required a new material base, i.e., "technical equipment, the extensive use of tractors and other farm machinery and electrification on a mass scale. This would remake the small farmer fundamentally and with tremendous speed"¹.

One of the tasks of industrialisation was to renovate the productive forces in the countryside and create the technical base for the triumph of the collective farm system. The accent was put on the development of tractor and farm-machinery construction. In 1927 the industry manufactured 103 million rubles' worth of farm machinery and implements; in 1928 the figure was 139 million rubles; in 1929—196 million rubles (three times more than in pre-revolutionary Russia).

Machinery and implements were sold at prices which the mass of peasants could afford. The state provided an increasing sum of credits, e.g., 66.1 million rubles in 1926/27, or 52.5 per cent of the cost of implements sold (125.8 million rubles). The supply of machinery was mainly the responsibility of co-operatives, and they distributed them in the interests of the toiling masses.

In 1927/28 agriculture received 148.6 million rubles' worth of machinery and implements; in 1928/29 the supply was nearly doubled and reached the sum of 240.3 million rubles. Such was the growth rates of material and technical development which were prerequisites for socialist reconstruction of the countryside. In 1927/28 some 109.3 million rubles were allocated for providing credits to peasants who wanted to buy machinery and implements; in 1928/29 the sum was increased to 141 million rubles. The wealthy peasants were only allowed to buy machines and implements after the needs of the poor and middle peasants had been satisfied. In 1927/28 credits to kulaks and wealthy peasants were only granted if there was a surplus of farm machinery. In 1928/29 all credits to them were stopped.

The peasants wanted to use new farm implements in their households. So this tendency gave birth to different associations for joint ownership and operation of machinery. The

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 217.

Soviet state decided to help the peasants and set up a comprehensive system of machine-hire stations in the countryside. The machine-hire stations of agricultural co-operatives, land agencies, state farms and peasant mutual-assistance societies played an important role in the struggle against kulak exploitation of poor peasants. With their help the Soviet state stepped into relations between the poor and wealthy sections of the peasantry and saved the poor peasants from hiring implements from kulaks.

By the end of 1927 there were 7,300 hire stations and 14,450 winnowing stations in the Russian Federation. They loaned machines and implements to the poor peasants on easy terms. On the eve of collectivisation, in 1928, there were 25,000 such stations catering for 2.3 million households. In 1929 the number increased to 33,400. Hire stations encouraged the use of efficient implements. During the spring ploughing of 1928 the harrow was used on only 8.1 million hectares, i.e., 9.8 per cent of the total area under spring crops. Thus the harrow was now of very little importance as a farming implement.

The introduction of tractors was a decisive factor in the agrarian revolution. It created the right conditions for the transition from primitive implements to modern highly efficient machines.

The Stalingrad Tractor Plant, the first in the USSR, went into construction in 1929. Its design capacity was 50,000 tractors a year.

The fact that there was no domestic tractor industry retarded the reconstruction of agriculture. Tractors had to be imported. In 1924 only 2,560 tractors were in operation. In 1924/25 an additional 6,665 made their appearance and in 1925/26 a further 10,100 tractors took their place in the fields. The figure was quite high for those days, and it meant that the exploitation of tractors had passed the experimental stage.

The very first experiments with tractors proved their advantages. They revolutionised the cultivation of fallow and virgin lands. The households which had tractors introduced multiple-field systems and winter ploughing. The higher level of agricultural techniques, better cultivation and reduction of time schedules helped increase the yields.

The tractor saved the peasant much hard labour. Peasants became convinced of its advantages. Crowds gathered from whole districts and sometimes from tens of kilometres away to watch the tractors in operation. The demand for tractors was too great to be satisfied.

The tractor became a most eloquent advocate for the transition to collective farming. A report from the Urals said that the associations of peasants "who buy tractors discard small lots in the second year and go over to joint cultivation, introducing the four-field system instead of the three-field system". A survey of tractor farming in the North Caucasus in 1927 revealed that the purchase of tractors "is usually accompanied by the organisation of machine associations or agricultural collectives" and that it led to "the socialisation of ploughland".

However, tractors still played an insignificant role in agricultural production. By the end of 1929 there were only 34,943 tractors, which accounted for only 2.8 per cent of the power resources in agriculture. The share of tractors in ploughing was very modest. In 1928 they ploughed only 0.8 million hectares, or 1 per cent of the total area under spring crops; tractors accounted for 0.2 per cent of spring sowing, 0.2 per cent of harvesting, and 1.3 per cent of threshing.

Production and technical forms of servicing agriculture had to be found which would ensure full and efficient exploitation of tractors so as to speed up technical reconstruction. This problem was solved thanks to the great contribution of the state farms which had accumulated much experience in the operation of new machinery by the beginning of the reorganisational period.

TRACTOR FLEETS AND THE FIRST MACHINE-AND-TRACTOR STATIONS

Cultivation of peasant lands by tractors first started in the Ukraine in the spring of 1927. It was decided to carry out an experiment on the Shevchenko State Farm.

In Odessa Region, where the state farm was located, there was quite a number of migrant settlements. Migrant peasants were in a very difficult situation. "Most of us," they wrote to *Izvestia*, "are poor peasants without horses and implements. We could not cultivate the land we received and had to lease it to the old-timer kulaks for a portion of the harvest. The harvests were poor because it is a well-known fact that those who rent the land are not interested in cultivating it properly. The small credits we received from the state were spent on food, and so we became poorer every year."

Most migrants readily agreed, of course, to cultivate the land with tractors. At first it was agreed that the tractors would do part of the work for cash payments on credit, but then it was decided to employ tractors for the whole cycle of field work. In the autumn a contract was signed for the tractor fleet to cultivate the fields of three migrant settlements.

The state farm association sent a fleet of ten tractors which ploughed and sowed the fields efficiently. "After we had seen what the tractors had done," the peasants wrote, "we no longer wanted to carry on with our small and poor farms; we decided to organise a collective tractor farm without any individual peasant lots under crops."

Many other tractor fleets were organised in the spring of 1928. The relations between the tractor fleet administrators and the peasants were regulated by voluntary contracts.

The dividing lines between individual lots were erased, the area under crops was turned into a single field for completely collective tractor cultivation. The peasants carried out the tractor maintenance work jointly. The contract specified that each household should do work in proportion to its land holdings. The same principle was applied in the distribution of the harvest, i.e., the portion which was left after the accounts had been settled for the employment of machines and for seed.

Thus, it was the size of holdings that determined the amount of products received by each peasant, and not the quality or quantity of work. However, socialist-type relations came to the fore which soon began to dominate in the production activities of peasants.

The tractor fleet administration committed itself to provide the tractors with all the necessary machines and implements, to supply high-quality seeds, and to send an agronomist and a mechanic to direct the work. It taught the peasants to drive the tractors and to use modern machines and implements. In return it got a quarter of the gross harvest of winter wheat (the staple crop) and a third of the other produce. The peasants preferred to pay in kind, because in case of poor harvests their losses were diminished. This form of payment heightened the interest of the fleet administration in obtaining bumper harvests.

At the end of 1928 the tractor fleets which worked in the area of the Shevchenko State Farm were reorganised into the First State Machine-and-Tractor Station.

The practical experience gained by the Ukrainian association of state farms revolutionised the approach to the problem of tractor employment and opened the way for the swift transfer of agriculture onto a new material and technical base. The initiative was supported by other state farms. In 1928 the state farms, in the principal grain-producing regions organised 73 tractor fleets.

The tractor fleets in the cotton-growing regions of Central Asia also reorganised their work. They were organised there in 1924 as the tractors could not be handed over directly to the associations of cotton-growers on account of the economic and cultural backwardness of the peasants.

The peasants who were served by tractor fleets founded cotton-producers' associations. The production costs were high and idle runs many, because of the fragmentation of lots (from 0.25 to 0.65 hectares), abundant irrigation ditches, mud walls and trees. The introduction of communal cultivation there was particularly complicated. However, the use of new machines created both the demand and the right conditions for uniting land holdings.

In the spring of 1928 tractor fleets served 113 cotton-growing associations which brought together nearly 30,000 peasant households. The tractors put to the plough some 28,600 hectares. In autumn of the same year these fleets were transferred to the cotton-growing co-operatives. They were to form the basis of the machine-and-tractor stations.

In the Ukraine and the Russian Federation co-operative tractor fleets appeared in the spring of 1928. The Kanglyn (later the Mineralniye Vody) tractor fleet in Terek Region (North Caucasus) began operating in April. It was the first major tractor fleet run by agricultural co-operatives in the Russian Federation. It cultivated the fields of the International Agricultural Association which was made up of 286 households.

By the middle of August of the same year agricultural co-operatives in the Russian Federation organised 13 tractor fleets which served 86 land associations.

In the autumn of 1928 the tractor fleets scored considerable successes. They put 18,431 hectares of land to the plough (formerly, no autumn ploughing had been done in those areas). In addition, they sowed 4,974 hectares to winter crops with high-grade seeds.

These successes proved to the peasants that it was more profitable to cultivate large tracts of land by tractors and that collective labour offered great advantages. Tractors became extremely popular in the countryside.

Tractor fleets and machine-and-tractor stations (MTS) became powerful tools for collectivising peasant households and liquidating kulak exploitation. In all areas where the tractor fleets and MTS operated, collectivisation was on the upsurge. By the beginning of 1929 some 80 collective farms and production associations had been formed in the operating area of the 13 tractor fleets in the Russian Federation. By August 58 fleets cultivated the fields of 362 collective farms and production associations.

The MTS helped the Communist Party and the Soviet state to centralise the distribution and utilisation of machinery and accelerate the technical reorganisation of agriculture.

PERSONNEL

The new machines required educated and efficient operators. As long as the number of tractors was small, they could be operated by urban workers. In the autumn of

1924 the first tractor drivers' courses were opened for peasants. In 1925 vocational schools also began to train machine operators. Most tractor drivers were trained on short courses, mostly of three months' duration. By the beginning of the spring sowing in 1928 some 21,200 people, mainly peasants, had completed such courses in the Russian Federation. The level of training at that time was not very high. The graduates could drive the tractor but they knew nothing about routine maintenance or repairs. There was a shortage of engineers and technicians capable of providing qualified assistance.

The radical reorganisation of agriculture implied not only the renovation of the technical base, but the introduction of modern agricultural techniques. The problem of agronomical personnel was acute. At the beginning of 1927 there were only 34,600 agronomists, veterinary surgeons and land surveyors in the USSR; half of them were employed in offices. Only those specialists who worked in the agronomical sections of land agencies, local unions and associations of agricultural co-operatives, and collective and state farms were directly connected with production.

The agronomical sections were the basic means for rendering agronomical, veterinary and land-surveying assistance to peasant households. Each of them catered for about 4,000 households scattered over a territory of up to 35 kilometres in radius.

At the end of 1928 the agricultural co-operatives in the Russian Federation had 3,329 specialists. It is significant that most of them were not direct organisers of production, but instructors in agricultural techniques.

The Russian agronomical school was noted for its achievements in research work. Such prominent scientists as N. I. Vavilov, V. R. Williams, D. N. Pryanishnikov and N. M. Tulaikov devoted their knowledge, experience and talents to the socialist reorganisation of agriculture. However, the achievements of science were being introduced into production slowly because of the shortage and poor training of practical workers. The personnel problem was perhaps just as complicated as that of technical re-equipment. But it was solved by the Communist Party during reorganisation of agriculture.

PRIMITIVE FORMS OF CO-OPERATION

The fundamental principle of Lenin's co-operative plan was the socialisation of market links by comprehensive development of consumer, credit and market-and-supply agricultural co-operatives. Since agricultural production was conducted by small, isolated households, in the main each peasant entered into economic relations with other peasants and with industry via commodity exchange, by selling his produce and by buying the produce of others and manufactured goods. At that time market relations dominated in the village and, consequently, the peasant was willing to co-operate in the field of marketing products, supply of manufactured goods and credit operations. It is only natural that as an economic association of small producers, the co-operative first takes root in the sphere of commodity circulation. The primitive forms of co-operation were designed to give the small-commodity producer the opportunity to avail himself of wholesale marketing and supply, and easy credits; they were designed to free him from the exploitation of commercial and usurer capital. While unifying the market connections of individual households, they introduced the fundamentals of collectivism into the economic activity of individual peasants, made inroads into the private-ownership psychology and tied the material interests of the individual peasant with the interests of other peasants and society as a whole.

When NEP was introduced, Lenin put before the Party the task of establishing economic ties between the small peasant economies and socialist industry by ousting private capital from the field of economic relations between town and countryside. Since the middle peasant had two social faces (he was both a toiler and a private owner), the countryside could develop either on the socialist or capitalist patterns. This was what made the struggle to win over the middle peasant so acute. The answer to Lenin's question "who will beat whom?" depended on who would become master of the domestic market and its links with the individual households, i.e., it all depended on which side of the fence middle peasants would choose to stand.

By the beginning of the reconstruction period the co-operatives and the state trade network had succeeded largely in squeezing private capital out of commerce. In 1926/27 private capital accounted for only 25.6 per cent of retail trade in the countryside. Like the establishment of economic relations between industry and peasant households this trend must be attributed to the development of co-operatives.

In the first years of NEP the greatest headway was made by consumer co-operatives. Their specific task was to acquire full control over trade in items of personal consumption. The peasants who united in consumer co-operatives were able to evade the clutches of merchants and to purchase manufactured goods at much cheaper prices. The great advantages inherent in co-operative trade stimulated the rapid progress of consumer co-operatives.

By the end of 1927 the village consumer co-operatives had a membership of 9.8 million (39 per cent of peasant households); in 1928 they brought together 54.2 per cent, and in 1929—58.3 per cent of peasant households. Their share in commodity circulation was much greater. In 1926/27 consumer co-operatives accounted for 53.3 per cent of commodities sold in the countryside, and in 1928/29, for 64.4 per cent.

Agricultural co-operatives played the main role in preparing peasants for the transition to socialism. They penetrated deeper and deeper into the economic activity of individual peasants and looked after their production needs. Peasant households acquired credits via agricultural co-operatives. In 1926/27 agricultural co-operatives accounted for 65 per cent of the machinery and implements supplied to the peasants in the Russian Federation; in 1927/28, their share was 70 per cent; in 1928/29—85 per cent. They also helped master new machinery, agronomical techniques, etc. The agricultural co-operatives served as intermediary stages in the transition from co-operative commodity circulation to the formation of co-operative production societies.

Gradually agricultural co-operatives became a dominating influence in the economic life of the Soviet countryside. On October 1, 1927 there were 64,573 various agricultural societies in the USSR. They brought together more than 8 million households, i.e., nearly a third of the total. This system

was extremely complex in its make-up. The peasant economic organisations differed in their functions and aims, and consequently in the nature of internal social relations.

Agricultural co-operatives made most headway in regions producing industrial crops (cotton, tobacco, sugar beet, flax). The bulk of these crops (80-90 per cent) was sold to the state. Their cultivation required a comprehensive system of agronomical techniques which could only be undertaken collectively by societies. This stimulated the growth of societies for the production and sale of cotton, tobacco, sugar beet and flax. It is significant that in 1927 the highest level (63.8 per cent) of co-operation of peasant households was registered in Uzbekistan. In nomad and semi-nomad regions with natural feudal and patriarchal systems of farming, the level of collectivisation was the lowest in the country.

At the end of 1927 the main group of agricultural co-operatives comprised societies whose task was to supply credits and means of production to individual peasants and to market their products. The 28,700 agricultural societies in this group brought together more than 90 per cent of the peasant households which had joined the co-operatives. The group comprised 7,840 credit societies and 15,682 general and specialised societies for marketing farm products, etc. They all functioned in the field of commodity circulation and were little concerned with direct production. However, many specialised co-operatives were engaged in processing products. These included dairy societies (5,705), and fruit and vegetable societies (1,068).

The second group consisted of peasant production associations with elements of collective economy and collective ownership of the means of production. The group comprised a total of 18,555 co-operatives, including 10,347 machine societies, 3,505 land melioration societies, 1,734 seed-growing societies and 1,880 cattle-breeding societies. This higher form of co-operation showed that conditions were becoming more favourable for collective farming. By the end of 1927 more than 700,000 peasant households went over to partially collective production.

The collective farm, with public ownership of the means of production and collective labour, is the highest form of production co-operation. It knows no class differentiation or

exploitation of man by man. On October 1, 1927 there were 17,267 collective farms (societies, artels, communes) with a total membership of nearly 400,000 peasant households.

The various societies formed the lower network of agricultural co-operatives. They were amalgamated into local territorial unions which in turn were combined into central republican unions, specialising in the organisation of production and marketing of products.

The co-operatives were set the task of unifying the poor and middle peasants. Those were the very sections of the population which the co-operatives had to help economically and lead to new forms of social production. However, primitive forms of co-operation were in evidence in the sphere of commodity and money circulation which primarily involved the kulaks and the most prosperous of the middle peasants who had strong links with the market. It was much more difficult to draw in poor peasants into the co-operatives. The poor peasant was producing just enough to sustain his own family, and his commodity production was insignificant. These objective obstacles were aggravated by the attempts of kulaks to gain control over the co-operative organisations. So it was necessary to introduce different quotas of entrance fees and shares for members according to their social standing. Poor peasants were given more credits, and co-operatives offered them more privileges. In 1926 a special fund (formed from state allocations and deductions from the profits of co-operative organisations) was set up to unite poor peasants in co-operatives. It was used to cover the entrance fees and shares of poor peasants.

The Communist Party gave poor peasants greater influence in the leading organs of co-operative organisations, and encouraged their activity and initiative. The role and influence of kulaks was restricted. They did not have the right to be founder members of co-operatives, and they could not be elected to the boards, councils or auditing commissions. They were the last in line of all whose economic needs were looked after by the co-operatives; they had no right to the privileges enjoyed by poor and middle peasants.

There was a radical change in the correlation of class forces in the co-operatives compared with pre-revolutionary days. In 1927 nearly 30 per cent of poor peasants, 60 per

cent of middle peasants and only 10 per cent of kulaks were members of co-operatives.

On the eve of collectivisation the recruitment of poor and middle peasants into co-operatives was intensified and the social composition of the co-operatives was considerably improved. Economic assistance to poor households was increased. Thus the influence of poor and middle peasants in the co-operatives grew, and the kulaks were ousted on an increasing scale. This was an important social prerequisite for the transition from co-operative trade to co-operative production. Whilst the poor peasants favoured collective production on account of their objective position, and so became the leading force in the co-operation of production, the kulaks regarded it as a threat to their existence and therefore fiercely opposed it.

CONTRACT AGREEMENTS

Contract agreements between towns and villages for the purchase of farm produce played an exceptionally important role in the transition from village co-operative market ties to production co-operatives. This form of commodity exchange between town and countryside regulated not only the purchases but the output of farm products. It may be said that contract agreements conjoined co-operative trade operations and co-operative production. It was a transition from a lower to a higher stage of economic association.

The contract agreement, concluded between a co-operative or a state organisation on the one hand, and the peasants on the other, guaranteed that the purchasing agencies would receive fixed quantities of farm products in good time. The contracting organisations promised to buy the products at agreed prices, irrespective of fluctuations in the market prices; they advanced money, seed and the means of production to the peasants and rendered them agronomical assistance.

The contract agreements for supplying the countryside with the means of production brought about a tremendous

increase in the organising role of each of the factors in the reconstruction of agriculture. In the routine work of co-operatives the purchasing of surplus products from small farms and the delivery of the means of production to them were separate commercial operations, but now they were being turned into a single complex of measures for the development of productive forces and the transformation of social relations in the countryside.

Prior to 1928 contract agreements were utilised mostly in the commercial branches of agriculture (production and marketing of sugar beet, cotton, flax, hemp, etc.). Such agreements were common practice even before the revolution; they covered almost the complete output of those commodities. In 1928-1929 contract agreements began to cover many other fields of agricultural production. In 1928 contract agreements were signed for grain, and soon millions of peasant households were involved.

The households which signed the agreements had to introduce a minimum of agronomical measures for improving land cultivation and harvesting. That required joint efforts by whole groups of peasant households; it brought them elements of collective labour and the production association. So the agreements were mostly signed with associations and not with individual peasants. In 1928 some 15.4 per cent of the contracted area under winter crops belonged to collective farms; 15.4 per cent to production associations with their own statutes; 42.9 per cent to land societies; 23.2 per cent to groups of peasants with no definite statutes; and only 0.7 per cent to individual peasants.

The social content of the economic assistance to the weak peasantry became more noticeable. Advances in cash and kind were first given to collective farms, production associations and poor households, then to middle peasants, and only after that, to kulaks. The amounts of advances were varied. Poor and middle peasants were afforded the opportunity of signing contracts; this improved their position and freed them from kulak exploitation.

The contract agreements gave birth to a whole system of primitive production associations (like sowing societies) and contract groups, which involved thousands of households and which became the embryos of many collective farms. In 1928

some 3,987 collective farms, 4,955 sowing and 1,385 machine societies were inaugurated in the Russian Federation when contracts were being signed for the spring crops. At the end of the autumn sowing campaign in the principal grain regions of the Russian Federation there were nearly 5,600 sowing societies with statutes of their own; they united up to 140,000 households. The growth of contracts in 1929 increased the number of sowing societies in April to 12,452, incorporating 408,800 households. In autumn 20,033 societies brought together 952,800 households.

In 1929 the contracts covered 100 per cent of the state purchases of raw cotton, 80 per cent of tobacco, 78.7 per cent of sugar beet, 43 per cent of flax, 36 per cent of grain and 30 per cent of oil seeds.

The contracts, the radical improvement in the supply of machines and implements and other assistance from the state acted as a powerful stimulus for the poor and middle peasants to join co-operatives, particularly production co-operatives.

PEASANTS VOTE FOR CO-OPERATIVES

Increased state assistance in 1928 and 1929 stimulated the mass entry of peasants into co-operatives. By October 1928 there were 107,000 agricultural co-operative associations as against 64,600 in October of the previous year. A year later there were 165,000 co-operatives. Nearly 7 million peasant households joined agricultural co-operatives over a period of two years. The number of households in co-operatives increased from 30 to 55 per cent. In Uzbekistan 81 per cent of peasant households became members of co-operatives; in the cotton-growing regions of Turkmenia 80 per cent of the households joined co-operatives. The level of membership in the cattle-breeding regions of Central Asia and Kazakhstan fluctuated between 10 and 40 per cent; in Abkhazia, credit co-operatives incorporated 60 per cent (57.4 per cent as of April 1, 1929), and tobacco co-operatives 87.5 per cent of households. This proved that the peasants were becoming convinced that the old way provided no answer to poverty

and kulak exploitation; it meant that the countryside was turning towards socialism.

There were qualitative changes in the co-operative movement. They were manifested in the transition from co-operative commodity and money relations to primary co-operative production. At the end of 1927 only 1.1 million (12 per cent) of the total of 8 million co-operated households were members of production co-operatives; they accounted for 3.7 per cent of the total number of peasant households. At the beginning of October 1928 production co-operatives incorporated 2,356,000 households (17.6 per cent of the households amalgamated in agricultural co-operatives); they accounted for 9.3 per cent of the total number of households in the countryside. In other words, one out of every ten households was a member of a production co-operative. On October 1, 1929, production co-operatives incorporated 6.1 million households—nearly every fourth household.

The broad-based organisation of primitive production associations played an exceptionally important role in preparing the countryside for socialist transformations. Their significance as intermediary stages in the transition to collectivisation can best be understood from the example of machine associations. At the end of 1927 there were 10,268 machine associations in the Russian Federation; they unified 230,000-240,000 households. A year later, their number increased to 15,942 (roughly by 50 per cent). The machine associations represented the most popular and widespread form of peasant co-operation in production.

The machine associations were formed for the joint purchase and operation of complicated farm machinery which was too expensive for individuals to buy. As a result, the amount of technical equipment of each household in the association was increased five- or sixfold. But what mattered most was that 18 or 20 households jointly operated the machinery; in the individual sector only one out of 25 or 30 households could afford to have such machinery, while all the others could at best only hire it.

The peasants in the machine associations were convinced from their own experience that joint ownership and exploitation of complicated implements was a great advantage, and so they allocated more funds for the purchase of ma-

chinery and implements. In 1926, 100 per cent of the tractors in Siberia were in collective ownership; other figures were: threshers—80 per cent; sowing machines—72.7 per cent; harvesters—49 per cent; mowing machines—39.7 per cent. Only 3 per cent of ploughs and other simple implements were collectively owned.

Collective ownership of the means of production inevitably led to the collective use of tractors and threshers which the peasant could not operate on his own. This process was accompanied by the amalgamation of land and the birth of collective farms.

The organisation of primitive production co-operatives and their transformation into collective farms became particularly intensive in 1928 and 1929. The task was to ensure the transformation of primitive associations into collective farms, though the formation of the former was to be encouraged.

In the spring of 1928 the growth of the collective farm movement came about mostly from the transformation of primitive production associations into collective farms. In 1929 the machine associations were given the status of collective farms. That stimulated the mass collective farm movement. In the spring of 1929 some 7,662 (43.5 per cent) of the total of 17,616 associations in the Russian Federation cultivated land collectively; in the USSR as a whole 8,275 associations out of the total of 21,807 were engaged in collective cultivation.

Not all peasant households passed through the primitive production association stage prior to collectivisation, otherwise the latter would have taken a much longer time than it did. However, the primitive forms of production co-operative played an important part because they introduced elements of collectivism and prepared the way for revolutionary changes in agriculture.

COLLECTIVE FARMS IN 1926-1927

The primary prerequisite for reorganising agriculture was the growth of the collective farm movement. The pioneers of collective farms blazed the trail to socialism in the coun-

tryside. Millions of peasants subsequently learned from their mistakes and achievements. The results of their social experiment helped determine the basic forms and methods of collective farming on a mass scale.

In the middle of 1927 there were 14,832 collective farms in the USSR. They incorporated 194,700 (0.8 per cent) peasant households. Most of them were located in grain-growing regions where the class differentiation and the proportion of poor peasants were greatest and where the economic situation of the poor was particularly difficult. In those regions kulaks openly and ruthlessly exploited the poor. All this caused the poor peasants to turn to collective farming as a way out of their difficulties.

Moreover, the machinery which was being delivered to the countryside in increasing quantities was meant for grain cultivation on large tracts of land. At the end of the 1920s the grain-growing regions had a particularly high level of mechanisation. There were some 11,200 collective farms there—three-quarters of the total over the whole country. The centre of the collective farm movement shifted from the industrial regions to the country's south-east. By the summer of 1927 it encompassed the republics with backward social and economic relations. This was largely the result of the agrarian reforms in the middle of the 1920s. In Turkmenia, the first six collective farms appeared in the autumn of 1926; by the summer of 1927 there were 16 of them.

The most widespread form of collective farming was that involving agricultural artels (48.1 per cent of the total) and associations for joint cultivation of land—42.9 per cent. The number of communes dropped to 9 per cent. The associations for joint cultivation began to dominate in 1927 in regions with strong collective farm movements. The individual peasant who had just started out on the road to collectivisation preferred the forms which more or less left his own farm intact.

The correlation between social and individual economies was different on different types of collective farms and even in different production sectors of one and the same farm. Social economy in all spheres of production only prevailed in communes. In artels social economy was predominant in

crop production, but it played a secondary role in animal husbandry. In associations for joint cultivation of land collective cropping was subordinate to private farming, while collective cattle-breeding was still in its infancy. The following table indicates the percentage of socialisation in the collective farms of that period (the data were collected from 553 communes, artels and associations as of October 1, 1927):

Type of farm	Area under crops	Implements	Cattle		Farm buildings	Fixed assets, total
			draught animals	meat and dairy		
Communes	100.0	99.6	97.3	92.8	98.5	97.9
Artels	53.1	75.3	13.5	12.2	31.1	30.1
Associations for joint cultivation of land	17.8	33.2	2.9	3.0	6.5	15.2

Practically all draught animals, and meat and dairy cattle in associations for joint cultivation and even in artels remained in the private ownership of collective farmers.

In the first years of reconstruction the collective farm movement was representative of the village poor and the weak segments of the middle peasantry who were incapable of raising their economy single-handed. Prosperous households were few. Former middle peasants often joined the collective farms for mercenary motives, hoping to make use of state privileges in the interests of their own farmsteads. Sometimes they even inaugurated collective farms of their own which, however, served only to camouflage capitalist entrepreneurship and to extort all kinds of privileges.

In those years kulak households were not forbidden to enter collective farms. They could not found collective farms nor could they be elected to management bodies. But they could become members of collective farms provided that they agreed to the socialisation of their property and to stop exploiting the poor. However, from the very beginning the village bourgeoisie regarded the collective farm movement with enmity. The collective farms developed in the face of the struggle against the kulaks.

The first collective farms were not large-scale enterprises. At the end of 1927 collective farms had on average only 15 or 16 households with 8 horses and 8 or 9 head of cattle under common ownership. The area under crops was on average 59 hectares. Further differentiation according to the forms of collective farming shows that the communes had on average 102.5 hectares of land under crops, artels—59.4 hectares (and 26.1 hectares in the private use of the members), and associations for joint cultivation of land—49.9 hectares (and 57.7 hectares of un-socialised land). But that was a qualitatively new phenomenon as compared with small-scale individual farms which had an average of 4 to 6 hectares of land. The collective farms were able to take advantage of large-scale production—they could use new machinery, raise the level of farming, increase the fertility of soil and improve the standard of living.

Many collective farms arose as a result of simple pooling of draught animals and farm implements. In the autumn of 1927 there were only 4,988 tractors on the 11,161 collective farms in the Russian Federation, but still the collective farms were four or five times better equipped with machinery and implements than non-collectivised peasants. Even in those days collective farming lowered production costs and gave increased opportunities for expanding production. In 1927 non-collectivised peasants collected an average of 0.76 tons of grain per hectare, while collective farms brought in 0.88 tons.

Cattle-breeding in collective farms was considerably lagging. According to the data of 1927, the collective farms in the Russian Federation had an average of only 7.6 cows per 100 hectares, while non-collectivised peasants had 11.2 cows. This is hardly surprising since the collective farms consisted mostly of poor peasants, and, moreover, large herds of publicly owned cattle required great capital investments.

Lack of experience in managing large-scale public production and lack of professionalism in organising it also complicated the situation.

The egalitarian principles of the distribution of income, which were typical of the early collective farms, were still applied, though their inadequacy was self-evident. These

principles affected the material interests of collective farmers and resulted in quarrels which often led to the disintegration of collective farms. Gradually, new forms of distribution were developed which stimulated labour activity. Distribution according to the number of workhands or working days, which was quite widespread in some regions, was an attempt to correlate pay with volume of work done. Collective farms were searching in practice for rational forms of remuneration which would be in accordance with the socialist principle.

Many collective farms applied such principles as distribution according to contributed share, according to use of implements which formerly belonged to individual members, and according to size of socialised land holdings. As a result, some collective farm members received as little as 10 per cent of what the others got for their work.

It was impossible to prohibit the application of such principles as this might have discouraged middle peasants from forming an alliance with poor peasants. The middle peasant understood, of course, that the means of production which he formerly owned would be used by all, including those who had nothing to contribute to the public fund. This was why collective farms began to apply mixed forms of income distribution which took into consideration both labour and property contributions by the members. Distribution according to property contribution did not present any threat to the development of collective farms inasmuch as it did not assume the primary role. On the contrary, it encouraged the middle peasants to take the road of collectivisation.

II. THE COURSE TO COLLECTIVISATION

THE 15th CONGRESS OF THE CPSU

The 15th Congress of the CPSU which was convened in December 1927 outlined the task of spreading the collective farm movement. The congress examined the question of

agriculture and its further development. Having noted the general progress of all branches of agriculture, the congress underlined in its decisions that the rate of development and the yields were extremely low, and that there was a great dependence on natural factors (droughts). Of particular importance was the admission that a certain disproportion existed between the productive opportunities of small peasant households and the country's increased demand. The congress pointed out: "The marketable surplus of agriculture is extremely low as yet in comparison with the tasks presently faced by agriculture from the viewpoint of the socialist economic plan."

The Party believed that it was necessary to turn small peasant farming into large-scale collective farming in order to ensure socialist reorganisation and the progress of agriculture. The resolution on the Central Committee's report to the congress said: "It is necessary to pose as the priority task, on the basis of the further co-operation of peasants, the gradual shifting of scattered peasant economies on to the rails of large-scale production (collective cultivation of land on the basis of intensification and mechanisation of agriculture), encouraging and supporting the offshoots of social agricultural labour."

The decisions of the 15th Congress on the question of collectivisation were based on Lenin's co-operative plan. They stressed that the experience of the past few years fully corroborated the correctness of Lenin's plan, in accordance with which "the socialist industry will lead the small-scale peasant economy towards socialism precisely through co-operatives, transforming the individual and fragmented production units—by the process of circulation and increasingly by the reorganisation and amalgamation of production itself—into large-scale socialised economies on the basis of new techniques (electrification, etc.)".

The policy of making an all-out attack on the kulaks was a fundamental provision in the course to collectivisation proclaimed by the 15th Congress. The new situation brought about by the swift growth of socialist industry, the dominance of urban and village markets, the consolidation of the alliance between the working class and the broad masses of the peasantry, and the general growth of the power of the

dictatorship of the proletariat enabled the Party to consistently and systematically restrict and oust capitalist elements from town and countryside, preparing the conditions for their ultimate liquidation. The course for achieving collectivisation of agriculture and the intensified offensive against the kulaks, adopted by the congress, was unanimously and resolutely approved by the Party and the whole people.

THE SPRING OF 1928

The system of state economic measures raised the material interests of peasants in the organisation of collective farms. Widespread organisational work was undertaken in the midst of the peasant masses. Thenceforth the task of Party and Soviet organisations in villages and volosts was to initiate the creation of collective farms, and not merely to encourage, popularise and control their organisation.

The peasants were faced with the question of the transition to socialism. They discussed it carefully and in great detail.

During the preparation for the spring sowing campaign and during the campaign itself, when new collective farms were springing up, the Party and Soviet organisations revised their work. The collective farm movement was most successful in villages with strong Party organisations, Soviets and co-operatives where they had close ties with the peasant masses; the difficulties and shortcomings in such places were easier to overcome.

The weakness and small number of village Party cells made it difficult to study the mood of the various sections of the population. The plans for collectivisation drawn up in regional, district or gubernia centres were frequently unsubstantiated; they envisaged the creation of collective farms in districts where the peasants were unprepared or, on the contrary, they failed to plan the organisation of collective farms in districts where the conditions were most favourable. An enormous number of collective farms appeared in the spring of 1928; provision had not been made for them in the plans and often they received neither privi-

leges, credits, machinery or implements. The scope of collective farm movement had surpassed the best expectations of local organisations.

At the beginning of 1928 even the boldest predictions stated that the number of collective farms would not increase by more than 20 per cent in one year. So corresponding allocations were made for credits, machinery and the required number of specialists for land management and agronomical services to the new collective farms. But as it turned out, events shattered the calculations, and most of the new collective farms found themselves in dire straits. By June 1928 the number of collective farms had increased by more than 100 per cent to a total of 33,258. The level of collectivisation in the countryside went up from 0.8 to 1.7 per cent.

The collective farm movement was particularly widespread in the North Caucasus, the steppe-lands of the Ukraine and in the Crimea. The rest of the country only caught up in the autumn of 1929 with the level which they had achieved by the spring of 1928. Those regions opened the way for others, and they gave some indication of the short-term prospects in store for other regions.

The appeal "On the Basic Tasks of Departments in Charge of Work in the Countryside", which the Party's Central Committee adopted on May 15, 1928, summed up the results of the first six months of collectivisation. On the basis of these results, the Central Committee advanced the idea of mass collectivisation in agriculture. One of the principal tasks of Party policy in the countryside was the recruitment of middle peasants for the collective farm movement. This task was to be accomplished by the introduction of collective land cultivation in whole villages.

THE FIRST ALL-UNION CONGRESS OF COLLECTIVE FARMS

The district, territorial, regional and republican congresses of collective farms in the spring of 1928, particularly the First All-Union Congress of Collective Farms, were of out-

standing significance in the planning of further collectivisation. They discussed the situation in collective farms, their needs, ways of strengthening and developing them, and the experience and knowledge gained by the pioneers of the collective farm movement.

The First All-Union Congress of Collective Farms was held in Moscow from June 2 to June 6, 1928. It was attended by 404 delegates, some of whom (215) represented collective farms, and some (136) the collective farm sectors in the local unions of co-operatives. The congress heard and discussed reports on the tasks of the collective farm movement, the organisation of labour in the collective farms and forms of remuneration, and the organisation of social production.

M. I. Kalinin presented a report on behalf of the Soviet government in which he focussed attention on the question of looking for the most rational ways of developing the collective farm movement as one of the basic tasks of practical work at grass-root level, in the villages. "The farm workers," he said, "are not only producers of material values, but they are also creators of new forms of life; they must never rest content with the existing forms, they must always look for new ones."

The ideas expressed by the pioneers of the collective farm movement about the prospects of spreading collectivisation were quite interesting.

Meleshko, Chairman of the Komintern Commune in Kherson Region, said: "The population is ready for collectivisation, but there is one drawback: we lack people today to organise them for the purpose."

Zalessky, a collective farmer from Byelorussia, put the rhetorical question: "What must we do to get the peasants join the collectives themselves? First of all, the peasant must see actual advantages in this form of economy. The peasant is still strongly influenced by the ownership psychology, he says to himself: 'This is my patch of land, this is my shed—how can I leave it all?' Well, if we really want to convince the peasant of the advantages in the collective form of economy, we must improve the existing collectives."

Bunatyan, a representative from Armenia, spoke of consolidating the existing collective farms: "The best thing to do is to strengthen and improve the existing collective

farms. We must not forget that millions of peasants are watching us. If we fail to run things properly, we will be unable to attract peasants, particularly middle peasants, into collective farms."

The delegates insisted that new collective farms be organised at the same time as the existing farms were strengthened; they said that it was necessary to win over the peasantry by the successes of collective production. At the same time many delegates claimed that it was high time to do away with individual farming and to turn the collective farm movement into "a battering-ram for destroying the individual peasant economy". These appeals were made mostly by representatives of poor peasants and farmhands who had been convinced of the need to switch over to collectivisation and who had a burning desire to free themselves from the clutches of the private-ownership system in the countryside and go on to the offensive against everything which obstructed the establishment of the new system.

In its resolution "On the Routine Tasks of the Collective Farm Movement" the congress stressed the need to spread the collective farm movement, consolidate the successes, normalise life on the collective farms and develop their economy. The congress appealed to all poor and middle peasants "to rally under the banner of collectivisation and to repeal mercilessly the attempts by kulaks to frustrate the great cause of the socialist reorganisation of the countryside".

PROGRESS OF THE COLLECTIVE FARM MOVEMENT

In summer the scale of the collective farm movement was considerably reduced. The fields had been sown, and the principal task was to raise a good harvest and collect it in time. But as field work was nearing completion, the movement once again began to gather momentum. As of October 1, there were 38,139 collective farms which incorporated 595,400 peasant households (2.3 per cent of the total).

New factors began to come into play. In spring there appeared many small collective farms for which it was

extremely difficult to provide organisational and technical services. It had been proved in practice that small farms could not purchase machinery or operate it efficiently; they could not raise the level of production.

So in many districts small collective farms were merged into larger units or were enlarged by the recruitment of new members. As a result, the average size of collective farms doubled or even trebled. This was a necessary and correct step which permitted better use to be made of large-scale production. The amalgamation of small collective farms within one village resulted in the collectivisation of whole villages; it helped recruit middle peasants for the socialist reorganisation of the countryside.

In the spring of 1928 it was decided in North Ossetia to organise, as an experiment, a mammoth collective farm—the Digora agro-industrial complex. It was an attempt to combine the industrial and agricultural principles of work in one farm. During the year the combine encompassed a whole district—nearly 1,800 peasant households and 15,200 hectares of land, including 12,400 hectares of ploughland. The experiment proved a failure because the level of economic development was insufficiently high. Later the combine split up into a number of conventional collective farms. This was in fact the first experiment in collectivising a whole district.

In the second half of the same year it was decided to collectivise the Volovsk District, Tula Gubernia. The strong-points there were two well-established and economically sound collective farms—the Krasivaya Mech association for land cultivation (in terms of organisation and level of socialisation it was well ahead of many artels) and the Avangard Commune. In spring they were surrounded by many small collective farms. The tendency to amalgamate, which appeared almost immediately, was so strong that preparatory work for full collectivisation of the district (12,000 households, 92,000 hectares of land) was started in the autumn.

By the middle of 1928 the highest level of collectivisation in Kadnikov district, Vologda Gubernia, had been achieved by the Tigina sector of Ogibalov volost. It had 18 villages (860 households, 4,500 inhabitants). By the middle of June

there were three collective farms. So the question of "collectivising the whole of Tigina" was placed on the agenda.

This first success kindled the flames of a bitter class struggle. The kulaks launched a serious counterattack; they spread false rumours ("all will be eating from one pot", "rations will be introduced, and surplus taken away", "collective farm leaders are getting big money", etc.). They promised grain to collective farmers if they would only agree to return to individual farming; collective farm organisers were threatened.

The natural doubts in the success of the new undertaking and the hesitation of small owners were intensified by kulak propaganda. The women—the most backward section of the population—were the ones who responded most sharply to the rumours. Many wives launched "a real crusade against their husbands. They pestered them day and night. They even followed them to the collective farm meetings and caused scandals." Some peasants began to leave collective farms.

It was necessary to intensify explanatory work and, above all, to consolidate the new collective farms. The organisers called a series of general village meetings and explained what life and work in the collective farms was like. Of particular importance were their reports about the changes in land legislation, under which the best land was to be allocated to the collective farms or, if there were no collective farms, to the poor peasants.

The situation in Tigina began to change. Some peasants, who had left the collective farms, returned. In many villages initiative groups were set up to organise new collective farms. But kulak resistance had not been broken. Most non-collectivised peasants continued to regard collective farms with apprehension and even with enmity. This was particularly true of those whose interests were affected by the allotment of the best land to the collective farms. The kulaks were quick to act.

The collective farmers applied to the district authorities and asked them to arrest the kulaks who organised actions against the collective farms. The situation was normalised.

Early in September nine collective farms which incorporated 20 per cent of the peasant households, three co-operatives and the committee of peasant mutual assistance, signed an agreement on amalgamation. Its task was the collectivisation of Tigina, and the provision of economic services to the existing collective farms (construction of a sheepskin and leather factory, a power station, a "high-standard school", etc.). An agronomist was brought in. Tigina was declared a shock district, and soon it was regarded as a model district for the whole republic.

Digora, Volovsk and Tigina districts were the first in the Russian Federation that were ready to complete collectivisation at the end of 1928. The process of collectivisation was different in each of these districts; they experimented in various forms and methods of organising collective economy. But one accomplishment was common to all—they proved in practice that peasants of whole districts, as well as of villages and settlements, could be drawn into collective farms.

Gradually, the attitude of peasants began to change, and age-old concepts were reviewed. Moral authority passed from the petty owner, who just managed to provide sustenance for his family, to the collectivist who wanted to improve life for all, who began to think about opening schools for all, who began to yearn for electric lights for all. This was a major victory which socialism scored in a number of districts, even though they were not very large.

In the winter and spring of 1929 the collective farm movement continued to grow, its scope exceeded the planned targets. According to estimates, at the end of 1928/29 the number of collective farms was to be increased to 38,000, but there were already 57,000 of them by June 1, 1929. Some 1,007,700 peasant households (instead of the estimated 564,200) joined collective farms. Over the country as a whole the level of collectivisation reached 3.9 per cent. The tempo was increasing everywhere. In the summer of 1929 the wave of collectivisation swept over practically all republics, territories and regions.

Gradually, collectivisation began to involve whole settlements. In the grain-growing regions of the Russian Federation 240 settlements were fully collectivised. In the

Ukraine, 273 land societies joined collective farms (mostly associations for joint cultivation of land). Whole settlements were collectivised in Byelorussia, Kazakhstan and the Urals.

The number of districts with complete collectivisation was increasing although collectivisation there had been planned to be completed in the early 1930s. Early in July there were more than 20 such districts in the Russian Federation. In most of them collectivisation was undertaken with the support of tractor fleets and MTS. Complete collectivisation of whole districts was made possible by the changing attitude of the middle peasants.

The successes of the collective farm movement, which by the summer of 1929 had achieved double the planned figures for the whole year, the appearance of fully collectivised villages and districts, which showed that it was possible to accelerate the technical reconstruction of agriculture with the help of machine-and-tractor stations—all this indicated that in the summer of 1929 the Soviet countryside stood on the threshold of a new stage of development.

III. COMPLETE COLLECTIVISATION

THE MIDDLE PEASANT MAKES HIS CHOICE

Until the middle of 1929 the collective farm movement mostly involved poor peasants and farmhands. They were at the forefront of the struggle for socialist reorganisation of agriculture. They were the first people to be convinced of the advantages of collective economy and were ardent advocates of it.

In the second half of 1929 the movement was reinforced by a growing number of middle peasants. It was this that turned it into a mass movement. A new and more complicated stage was reached—the decisive stage of socialist

reconstruction of agriculture when the problem of "who will beat whom" was to be finally solved.

It took the middle peasant a longer time to consider all the pros and cons. Quite naturally, he was rather hesitant about the innovation. The poor peasant who joined the collective farm expected to gain something simply because he had nothing to lose. His whole property consisted of a plot of barren land and, if he was fortunate, a horse. Not so with the middle peasant. It was much more difficult for him to give over to the collective farm his horse and more or less sturdy economy. The middle peasant was always a practical and realistically minded man. Experience, however, convincingly proved that petty ownership exacted heavy labour, yet produced a miserly income. The habits of private ownership, age-long traditions and the ensuing individualistic psychology pulled the middle peasant one way, while the revolutionary reality drew him the other. Where was the answer?

The following is the story told by Ivanov, a prosperous peasant from the village of Ivanovka, Tambov District:

"What moved us to join the collective farm? Why, did I really decide to discard my private farmstead? Well, it was because I was fed up with moving from one patch of communal land to another; I was fed up with the boundary lines. I could no longer look at the costly implements which I had bought but which lay idle and grew rusty.... Why should I break my back to buy these implements all alone when, for instance, it would be 12 times easier, cheaper and better for 12 households to purchase and use them? Anyway, I was tired of being an individual peasant and owner. The trouble was that I worked for the horse, instead of the horse working for me. It was not the farmstead that existed for me, but I for the farmstead; I was the slave of my horse and implements.... I would even have given away half of my horse, only to be free of the long-suffering life of the individual peasant."

Other middle peasants, even the most prosperous of them, held similar views.

Thus, the dissatisfaction with life and the desire to build a new one on reasonable and economically rational prin-

ciples turned the middle peasant towards the collective farm. He began to study carefully the results of the collective and state farms.

Peasant delegates were sent even to distant places to see what life was like in collective farms; peasants went on mass excursions to such major socialist enterprises as the Gigant Grain State Farm in the Salsk steppes, the Seyatel Collective Farm, and the Rostov Farm Machinery Plant, a part of which was put into operation in 1929.

These concrete examples of socialist economy together with the privileges which the state offered to collective farmers encouraged middle peasants to join collective farms. In the autumn of 1929 the collective farm movement in more than 200 districts grew up into the movement for complete collectivisation. It signified a new stage, a new margin in the transition from capitalism to socialism.

THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW POLICY

In the second half of 1929 the Communist Party and the Soviet government adopted a course for direct socialist reconstruction of agriculture throughout the country. The Party believed that the problems faced by agriculture should be solved by the further intensification of the processes of collectivisation and the organisation of state farms, by the further improvement and strengthening of the collective farms and state farms, and finally by the intensification of the development of industry which is the key to the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. This idea dominated the work of the Plenary Meeting of the Party's Central Committee in November 1929.

The plenary meeting warned against underestimating objective difficulties (shortage of machinery and personnel, lack of experience, etc.), but at the same time it resolutely stressed that this was no excuse for slackening the rates of collectivisation.

The Party's directive for the intensification of collectivisation did not mean that the peasants were to be coerced

into collective farms. It believed that collectivisation could be stepped up by greater economic, propaganda and organisational work in the villages, and not by crude administrative methods. A whole system of measures in this direction were elaborated by the Central Committee's Plenary Meeting in November 1929 and envisaged by the Central Committee's decision of January 5, 1930, "The Rate of Collectivisation and State Measures to Assist for the Development of Collective Farms", and by many other Party and government directives.

The state increased its financial aid to the collective farms. It allocated 76 million rubles in 1927/28; 170 million rubles in 1928/29, and 270 million in 1929/30. But even the last sum proved to be insufficient because of the increased scale of collectivisation. On January 5, 1930, the Party's Central Committee instructed the allocations for 1929/30 to be increased to 500 million rubles at the expense of other sectors of the economy. In 1930 the state gave the collective farms grants totalling 1,000 million rubles.

The state also created other conditions to encourage the voluntary entry of peasants into collective farms. The Soviet laws granted many privileges to collective farms and their members. The tax and land-management concessions stimulated individual peasants to organise collective production. The November plenary meeting also stressed that it was necessary to foster the "personal material interest of each collective farmer in higher labour productivity".

The training of personnel for the collective farms also accelerated collectivisation. Since the existing network of educational establishments was inadequate to satisfy the growing demand, numerous short-term courses were opened to train village activists as chairmen of collective farms, accountants, etc. The November plenary meeting issued instructions on dispatching 25,000 industrial workers to permanent jobs in the countryside. In actual fact a formidable force of 35,000 was sent. Most of them were Communists, Komsomol members, or shock workers from socialist construction sites.

The Party took steps to the activity of groups of poor peasants and farmhands, village Soviets, and trade unions of

agricultural workers. Village Party and Komsomol organisations were strengthened. Communists, Komsomol members and village activists were told to draw the peasants into the collective farms not only by propaganda work, but by their own example. This example brought good results.

Propaganda work and popularisation of the advantages of collective farms were greatly stepped up. Never before had villages witnessed so many meetings, conferences and discussions as in 1929-1931; propaganda in the press had never been so militant. In the middle of 1930 the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta* had a circulation of 1.7 million; by the spring of 1931 this had risen to 2.5 million. At that time no other newspaper in the world could boast such a circulation. During the First Five-Year Plan the printing of books on agricultural subjects reached a record level. It must be stressed that most of these books and booklets were meant for the general reader. If we take into account that the propaganda of collectivisation was the main subject of all political and agricultural literature, then it is easy to see that the period was one of the most intensive propaganda work by the Party and the state in the countryside. All that helped accelerate collectivisation on a sound and voluntary basis as was the Party's intention.

Based on the tendencies in the collective farm movement and the measures mentioned above, the Party's Central Committee fixed in its decision of January 5, 1930 the rates of collectivisation for each district in accordance with their state of readiness. Special reference was made to two groups of districts. The first comprised the most important grain-producing regions—the North Caucasus, and the middle and lower reaches of the Volga. The decision stated that collectivisation there "could be mostly completed in the autumn of 1930 or at any rate in the spring of 1931". The other group comprised the remaining grain-producing regions where collectivisation was to be completed in the autumn of 1931 or the spring of 1932. The decision also fixed the date for completing collectivisation in the country as a whole. It said: "Instead of collectivising 20 per cent of the sown acreage, as envisaged by the five-year plan, we shall be able to solve during the five-year period the problem of collectivising the vast majority of peasant households."

THE COLLECTIVE FARM MOVEMENT DURING THE WINTER OF 1929/30

In the second half of 1929 the situation in the countryside was as explosive as during the revolution. Meetings of the poor and general meetings placed on the agenda one issue—the organisation of collective farming.

It had been proved in practice that the collective farms were strong when considerable amount of preparatory work had been put into their organisation. The classical way was the gradual transition of peasants from primitive forms of co-operation to the socialisation of the principal means of production. There was no shortage of initiative. Many amateur agrotechnical courses which were opened by pioneer peasants frequently turned into collective farms. It was in this way that the Zavety Lenina Collective Farm in the Ural village of Maltsevo came into being in January 1930. The farm's predecessor was an agricultural society which was founded in 1925 by T. S. Maltsev, a talented pioneer peasant who is now a prominent scientist.

In the period from July to October 1929 as many peasants joined the collective farms as during the whole preceding 12-year period of Soviet power. In the following three months the number of collective farms more than doubled.

It was the beginning of the mass movement for collectivisation. It would be wrong to assume that once the new stage in the collective farm movement had begun, the majority of peasants immediately became resolute supporters of collectivisation. The process was complex and sometimes contradictory.

What mattered was not the numerical strength (though it was sufficiently great), but the new qualitative level. The middle peasants, who constituted the mass of the peasantry, began to join collective farms.

At the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930 collectivisation encompassed the whole country. The growth in numbers was accompanied by qualitative changes. Collective farms were being merged into larger units. In the autumn of 1929 collective farms were on average 2.5 times larger than in 1928, and in 1930 the size of collective farms once again

more than doubled. That consolidated and multiplied socialist property.

Associations for the joint cultivation of land had been predominant before 1930, but their character underwent serious qualitative changes, and the level of socialisation in the associations came close to that in the artels. The decision of the Party's Central Committee of January 5, 1930 stated that the artel was to be the principal type of collective farm. The government worked out measures to stimulate the economies of the advanced types of production co-operatives. Under the unified agricultural tax law adopted on February 23, 1930, the rate of taxation of collective farms depended on the degree of socialisation of the means of production and cattle, and not on profits. The higher the degree of socialisation, the lower the taxes. So the number of associations quickly dwindled. Soon, however, it was found that this did not always have the desired effect.

There was no precedent for socialist construction. The USSR had to act on its own and to check in practice many truths which hitherto were known to socialists only in theory. The most expedient means and forms of building socialism could only be found by proceeding slowly, sometimes groping in the dark.

Collectivisation affected the interests and lives of tens of millions of peasants. It was a very complicated process, as the Party stressed on many occasions. The Central Committee seriously warned Party organisations "against any 'decreeing' the collective farm movement from above which could create the danger of substituting a playing at collectivisation for genuine socialist emulation in the organisation of collective farms".

The decision of January 5, 1930, emphasised the need to combat decisively all attempts to hold back the collective movement because of the shortage of tractors and modern machinery.

Soon events proved that these fears were fully justified. The achievements were marred by serious mistakes. It was very hard to discover and analyse them as the strong and weak points of work, innovations and miscalculations were all intertwined.

In the winter of 1929/30 the rate of collectivisation increased. The membership of collective farms increased by 911,000 households in the period from July to September 1929, and by another 2.4 million in the following three months. In the first two months of 1930 nearly 10 million households (nearly 7 million in February) joined collective farms.

Having analysed the progress of collectivisation in different regions, the Party's Central Committee sent out at the end of January and in February 1930 many letters and telegrams to local government bodies in republics, territories and regions resolutely condemning the violation of the principle of free will in the organisation of collective farms. A letter to the Transcaucasian Territorial Committee and the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan said: "Under no circumstances must you substitute crude administration, in the race for high rates of collectivisation, for organisational and political work among the broad mass of the peasantry; fight resolutely against the distortion of the Party line." A comprehensive analysis of errors and proposed measures for correcting them were the subject of the Central Committee's decision of March 14, 1930, "On the Struggle Against the Distortion of the Party Line in the Collective Farm Movement", in the Central Committee's letter of April 2, "On the Tasks of the Collective Farm Movement in Connection with the Distortion of the Party Line", in the resolution of the Party's 16th Congress, "On the Collective Farm Movement and the Development of Agriculture" and in many other widely publicised Party documents.

The documents pointed out that it was, above all, "the principle of free will in the organisation of state farms that is being violated. In some districts the principle is being replaced by coercion and peasants are threatened that if they do not join the collective farms, they will be dispossessed as kulaks, deprived of electoral rights, etc." This meant that the methods of combating the kulaks were sometimes used against middle peasants.

The second mistake, as the Party's decision noted, was that the rate of collectivisation fixed by the Party for the most developed grain-growing regions, which were prepared

for collectivisation, was applied in non-grain-growing regions. The Party sharply criticised the fact that "preparatory work for collectivisation and patient explanation of the principles of Party policy to poor and middle peasants are replaced by bureaucratic dictation from above of inflated numerical data and artificial pumping up of the percentage of collectivisation".

The third blatant mistake was that there were "impermissible and harmful facts of forced socialisation of dwellings, small cattle, poultry, unsaleable dairy cattle and, in connection with this, stupid attempts to jump from the artel form of collective farming, which is the basic link in the collective farm movement, to communes".

All this gave rise to discontent among the peasants and discredited the collective farms.

The Party was greatly concerned with the situation in the countryside. The distortions threatened to alienate from the working class the ally with whom it had passed through the hardships of the Civil War, intervention, economic chaos and the period of rehabilitation. The Party warned in its decisions that the distortions endangered "the alliance with the middle peasants. Thus collectivisation and the cause of building socialism are also in danger." This is why the Party's Central Committee acted so resolutely in the struggle against the distortions and removed all obstacles in the way of the socialist reorganisation of the countryside.

THE FIRST SPRING

The spring sowing in 1930 proved a serious test for the young collective farm system. It was not a routine economic undertaking, but the first mass, collective sowing campaign. The authority of collective farms greatly depended on their ability to carry out the sowing efficiently.

This important economic and political task had to be solved in exceptionally difficult conditions. On top of such problems as lack of experience, shortage of specialists, etc., came the mass departure of peasants from communes, artels and even associations for joint cultivation.

The level of collectivisation dropped from 60 per cent in March to 21 per cent in August. In fact, the departure was not so great because many collective farms had only existed on paper.

The collective farms were left by people who were not convinced of the advantages of collective production, people who were hesitant and who had not tested the advantages of the new system in practice, which Lenin believed was an essential thing for the peasant to do.

The road traversed by collective farms was a difficult one, but they gained ground gradually. Nearly all collective farms celebrated "first furrow" festivals. Farmers with red banners went out into the fields. Though their numbers were few compared with the rest of the rural population, their meetings were attended by nearly all the other peasants. But even in the spring of 1930 when the departures reached a peak, the reverse process was underway. In the autumn there was a marked influx into the collective farms, which was to determine the subsequent development of the collective farm movement.

In spite of tremendous difficulties, the spring sowing in 1930 was completed successfully. The sown acreage in collective farms increased by nearly 34 million hectares compared with the previous year. This was the result of the socialisation of peasant holdings and the development of fallow lands. The sown acreage in the private sector decreased by more than 26 million hectares. Overall, the area under crops increased by more than 9 million hectares. These achievements were highlighted during mass political work among the peasants as proof of the advantages of collective farming over individual farming. The first spring of mass collectivisation had a profound effect on individual farmers and changed the situation in the countryside.

A NEW UPSURGE IN THE COLLECTIVE FARM MOVEMENT

The successes of collective farms influenced individual peasants. The positions of socialism in the countryside were greatly strengthened by the measures for encouraging col-

lective farms and the collective farm movement. In addition to the existing privileges, tax exemption was introduced for a period of two years on draught animals and cattle, including the privately owned cattle of farmers. The same ruling covered the acreage which was for the first time utilised for collective farm gardening. A discount of 50 per cent was made on the remaining acreage under collective farm gardens.

The state provided the collective farms with 976,000 tons of grain as interest-free credit for the spring sowing. It also helped them to develop their productive forces. A broad network of accelerated courses and schools was set up to train specialists for the collective farms (managers, tractor drivers, accountants, instructors in the new way of life, etc.).

The towns tremendously increased their assistance to the countryside. In the spring of 1930 the villages received help from 10,420 teams of urban workers. They numbered more than 72,000 workers and specialists—eight times as many as in 1929.

The new influx of peasants into the collective farms was growing. The first to return were those who had left the farms under the influence of kulak propaganda. After returning to the collective farms they became champions of collectivisation and urged the individual peasants to follow their example. A group of collective farmers wrote to *Pravda*: "We are returning to the collective farm because we found that only in the collective can the toiling peasantry win a better future. We and our wives frankly admit that we came under the influence of kulaks, but now we are correcting our mistake and joining the front ranks of the shock collectivists."

In the summer of 1930 the Party convened its 16th Congress. The congress noted that the situation in the countryside could be regarded as stable. It once again criticised the "leftist" distortions in the organisation of collective farms, but at the same time it pointed out that many executives went from one extreme (administrative coercion) to the other (abandonment of organisational work for drawing the individual peasants into the collective farms). The Party condemned the latter extreme as Right-wing opportunism.

After the harvest the collective farm movement intensified once again. The harvest was good, and the collective farms strengthened their positions. In October, Days of Collectivisation were celebrated throughout the country. The food shortage in towns was alleviated, the state having purchased nearly 50 per cent more grain than in 1929. The purchasing campaign was conducted more smoothly because the gross yield was 17 per cent higher thanks to the increased acreage and better yields. Peasants retained 12 per cent more grain than in 1929, while collective farmers retained 50 or 100 per cent more produce than individual peasants thanks to special privileges.

Party organisations, state organs, trade unions, the Kom-somol, state farms, the MTS and old collective farms all stepped up their work in the countryside. They popularised the ideas of collectivisation and helped poor and middle peasants organise collective farms. Village Soviets and co-operative organisations set up collectivisation assistance groups; district Party committees sent teams of activists to the countryside; assistance teams of workers and office employees broadened their activities.

One of the primary prerequisites for the new influx into the collective farms was the formation of a strong nucleus of active collective farmers. They remained in the collective farms during the mass exodus, and thus helped to save the collective farm system. Their faith and enthusiasm helped young and weak collective farms to overcome the difficulties of growth, the exodus, and the shortage of resources, and to successfully complete the first sowing campaign and the economic year. The success was consolidated by the rising living standards of collective farmers thanks to the distribution of incomes, the state's economic policy (privileges) and the active organisation of collective farms.

Elections for the boards of collective farms were held in the winter of 1930/31. It was an important political campaign because under the Party instructions reports had to be delivered at meetings of both collective farmers, and individual peasants; the latter showed great interest in the progress made in the collective farms. Such meetings stimulated the influx of new members into collective farms.

One of the most effective forms of mass political work involved the so-called recruitment teams, which conducted propaganda and organisational work. They were made up of activist collective farmers, who worked not only on a mass scale, but also individually with peasants.

By March 1931 the established collective farms had mobilised more than 23,000 activists for the purpose. There were 17,079 recruitment teams in the Russian Federation.

Non-collectivised peasants and representatives of new collective farms took guided tours to see how successful farms were getting along.

On the whole, in 1931 the collective farm movement developed on a sound basis from within. This is corroborated by the widespread appearance of so-called sponsor groups in villages which became forerunners of new collective farms.

The first groups of farmhands, and poor and middle peasants, who persuaded their fellow-villagers to join collective farms, were organised during preparations for the sowing campaign in 1930 in the Central black-earth region. Then they began to spring up in other districts. In February 1931 there were nearly 16,000 such groups in the Russian Federation.

By the beginning of 1931 the collective farms had incorporated 26.4 per cent of peasant households. The process particularly intensified in the spring of 1931. By the end of the year the collective farms incorporated 62.2 per cent of peasant households. That was the highest level of collectivisation during the five-year plan. Collectivisation was almost fully completed in the principal grain-producing regions and in some regions which produced industrial crops—the North Caucasus, the lower and middle reaches of the Volga, and the steppe and eastern districts of the Ukraine.

FEATURES OF COLLECTIVISATION IN CERTAIN DISTRICTS AND REPUBLICS

The socialist reconstruction of agriculture in different districts followed common principles and a single pattern, but there were differences in the rate and forms of reorga-

nisation and in the way the general laws which governed the process manifested themselves. This was mainly due to the different levels of social and economic development, territorial division of labour in agriculture, and national customs. In its decision of January 5, 1930, the Party's Central Committee took these circumstances fully into account and determined the rate of collectivisation for three groups of districts.

The objective conditions and, consequently, the progress of collectivisation differed even within the boundaries of one territory. In the North Caucasus, for instance, people in the valleys specialised in intensive agriculture, those who lived in the foothills were engaged in cattle-breeding, crop cultivation and horticulture, while the main occupation of highlanders was semi-nomadic sheep-breeding. In the east of Bashkiria the main occupations were sheep-breeding and stud farming, while in the west most peasants were engaged in grain (mostly wheat) production. In central Bashkiria the population was mostly engaged in crop cultivation, trapping and hunting. In the RSFSR as a whole there were of course greater differences in agricultural occupations.

All the peculiarities and the various conditions for the socialisation of different sectors of agriculture had to be taken into account. It was easier to collectivise crop cultivation than cattle-breeding, since at the initial stage collective farms could simply pool their land holdings and implements. It was not so with cattle-breeding. Straightforward pooling of cattle was out of the question. It was learned from experience that a rational socialisation of cattle-breeding required definite prerequisites that could be created on the basis of the existing collective farm system—byres, adequate fodder resources, etc. Thus, collective cattle-breeding required a higher level of organisation of collective farms. But in many cattle-breeding districts the population led a nomadic or semi-nomadic life; they stood at a lower level of development than the settled agricultural population.

For this reason collectivisation in crop cultivation served as the prerequisite for the socialisation of cattle-breeding. Socialist reconstruction was advancing most rapidly in the production of grain and high-yielding variation of industrial crops (sugar beet, cotton). The rate of collectivisation was

highest in grain-producing areas with cotton-growing areas coming in second and cattle-breeding regions, third.

But differences in the rate of collectivisation between regions cannot be simply explained by the territorial distribution of labour. Since collectivisation was primarily a socio-economic reorganisation, its rates, forms and methods were determined primarily by social and economic considerations. In this context, the most important criterion for regionalisation was the social and economic mode of production which prevailed in the given locality.

Before the revolution capitalism had gained a firm hold on agriculture in the Ukraine (particularly in the steppe regions), the lower reaches of the Volga, the east bank of the middle reaches of the Volga and some other districts with intensive agriculture. There the class contradictions in the countryside were most sharp and from the social standpoint, the peasants were more prepared for the liquidation of kulaks as a class on the basis of full collectivisation. As regards production, the best opportunities for mass organisation of collective farms existed there since grain was the staple product for the market. Thus, social and economic development in these regions was greater, while the objective difficulties fewer than in other localities. This is why collectivisation was started with the grain-growing regions.

Collectivisation in the central regions was carried out under different conditions. Shortage of land, low level of production, overpopulation and migration of peasants to towns were all characteristic of this part of Russia. A great deal of time and effort was needed to start intensive and strong social production. Factors both conducive and detrimental to collectivisation were at work.

In the west of the country collectivisation had a character all its own. The fact that many peasants lived in hamlets or on isolated farmsteads was a serious obstacle because of the need to move these households to villages.

In the Transcaucasian republics capitalism had given rise to a more or less deep stratification of the peasantry, but it had also left behind, even more than in Russia, vestiges of a semi-feudal economy. Besides grain, the Transcaucasian republics cultivated fruits, grapes, etc. The socialisation of perennial crops was more difficult than the socialisation of

one-year crops. This was only natural, because even a simple form of co-operation in the cultivation of one-year crops shows its advantages over individual farming in the first year. So collectivisation in vine- and fruit-growing districts proceeded more slowly, though without any distinctly local forms of transition to socialism (excluding the alpine regions).

The non-Russian districts along the Volga constituted a special group. They stood at different levels of development. In Tataria vestiges of pre-capitalist relations were few, and the class struggle in the countryside was acute. Here, the general level of culture was higher than that of all the other peoples in the Volga area. But the rate of collectivisation in the Tatar ASSR was lower than, for instance, in Bashkiria. This was because in Bashkiria there were more grain-producing state farms which acted as a sort of catalyst for collectivisation.

Vestiges of the patriarchal and feudal systems survived among the mountain people of Altai and the Caucasus, and in the mountain areas of Tajikistan. The process of collectivisation there required specific transitional measures.

Collectivisation in these backward regions had to contend with not only bourgeois, but also patriarchal and feudal relations.

At the same time much was done to settle the nomad cattle-breeders in one place. In the course of this work the collective farm movement involved many new segments of the peasantry. The Party's Central Committee pointed out that it was not possible to adopt there the pattern of more developed regions. On January 30, 1930, it sent a telegram to the leadership of the Central Asian republics, saying: "We believe that the adoption of greater rates of collectivisation in Central Asia on the pattern of the central regions of the USSR is unjustified. The specific conditions in these regions, particularly in Tajikistan, must be taken into full account. Take serious note of this warning and proceed with collectivisation in conformity with the actual involvement of the masses."

On February 11-12, 1930, the Party's Central Committee held a conference of the Party executives in economically backward non-Russian regions. The recommendations

made by the conference were embodied in the Central Committee's decision of February 20 "On Collectivisation and the Struggle Against Kulaks in Economically Backward Non-Russian Districts". Party organisations in non-Russian republics were instructed to focus attention on preparatory work for collectivisation taking due account of local features. The Party's 16th Congress worked out a comprehensive programme for collectivisation in the republics of the Soviet East and in other non-Russian districts. It stressed that "the form of collective farm must be in line with the type of region's economy peculiarities and the branch of farming".

In grain and industrial-crop districts the basic form of collectivisation was the agricultural artel, while in the cattle-breeding areas of Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Turkmenia, Tajikistan, Buryat Mongolia, the Kalmyk ASSR, the non-Russian republics of North Caucasus, and in the mountain regions of the republics of the Soviet East the most adequate form of collectivisation was the association for the joint cultivation of land. When officials in some districts, particularly in Kazakhstan, failed to understand local conditions and stepped up the reorganisation of associations into artels, the Party's Central Committee severely criticised their mistakes. On September 17, 1932, the Central Committee adopted a resolution "On Agriculture, Particularly Cattle-Breeding, in Kazakhstan" in which it explained that the skipping of the association stage endangered collectivisation and could undermine cattle-breeding; it gave cause for the activation of feudal, landlord and nationalistic elements which began to urge people to slaughter cattle and move off to distant places. The Central Committee once again stressed that associations for the joint cultivation of land and hay-making should be the basic form of collectivisation in the backward cattle-breeding regions.

The rate of collectivisation was different in different republics. By 1932 the highest level of collectivisation of land was registered in the Ukraine (80.5 per cent) and in the RSFSR (78.5 per cent). The level of collectivisation of peasant households was slightly lower—70 per cent in the Ukraine and about 60 per cent in the RSFSR. At the beginning of the 1930s the agricultural artel was the predominant

form of collectivisation. Thus the Ukraine and the RSFSR (the principal grain-growing regions) were a long way ahead in the level and scope of collectivisation.

By the end of the five-year plan mass collectivisation was virtually completed in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. In some of these republics the percentage of collectivisation of peasant households was even higher than in the Ukraine. In 1932 the Uzbek SSR went into first place in rate of collectivisation of households (81.7 per cent); the Kazakh ASSR and the Turkmen SSR followed with 73 per cent. In Uzbekistan artels accounted for 96.7 per cent of collective farms; in Turkmenia and Tajikistan the associations prevailed—more than 60 and 50 per cent respectively.

In Byelorussia 47.8 per cent of peasant households had been incorporated by collective farms by 1932; 48.7 per cent of the ploughland had been socialised. The comparatively low percentage of collectivisation there was due to the peculiar development of the Byelorussian countryside, particularly the great number of isolated farmsteads.

In Transcaucasia the greatest success in collectivisation was scored by Azerbaijan where more than half of the peasant households and over 60 per cent of ploughland were socialised. In Georgia and Armenia the collective farms incorporated 36-38 per cent of peasant households and slightly less than 40 per cent of ploughland.

These figures indicate that the rate of collectivisation and the degree to which it had been completed were different and that they depended on the actual situation in each of the Soviet republics. However there was one common feature—the mass adoption of the socialist method of development by the peasantry.

ORGANISATION OF THE ARTEL ECONOMY

Successes in production achieved by the collective farms were of tremendous importance for the planned completion of the collectivisation. The future of socialism depended not only on the willingness of peasants to set up collective farms,

but on their ability to organise and effectively manage collective farming. This is why the Party, the state and the leadership of collective farms were paying increasing attention to the organisation and economic consolidation of collective farms—development of their productive forces, accumulation of collective farm property, improvement of the organisation and remuneration of labour, etc.

The productive forces of the collective farm system increased tremendously during the First Five-Year Plan. Agriculture received more than 120,000 tractors; its mechanical capacity was doubled. Naturally, not all the problems could be solved immediately. In 1932 the MTS extended their services to just over a third of the collective farms; most of the work there was done by hand or with the help of draught animals.

The state lay down new legal principles, built up the stability of collective farm land tenure and undertook land management on easy terms.

On September 3, 1932, the Central Executive Committee and the People's Commissariat of the USSR issued a decree "On the Introduction of Stable Land-Tenure by Collective Farms". It was of tremendous significance in the consolidation of collective farms. The decree underlined: "While retaining the inviolability of the ownership of land by the workers' and peasants' state, the land which each collective farm now utilises within the present boundaries is to be allotted to it, and redistribution forbidden." During the Second Five-Year Plan this idea was embodied in the state act which transferred the land to the collective farms for permanent use.

The basis for the existence and development of the collective farm system is collective, socialist property. This is why the Party and the state paid particular attention to its strengthening.

On June 25, 1932, the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR passed the decree "On the Revolutionary Law" which guaranteed the rights and interests of the working people. The Soviet government warned that no administrative coercion in respect of collective farms would be tolerated. The Party and the government laid great emphasis on combining internal col-

lective farm democracy with strict discipline and fulfilment of obligations to the state. One of the most important acts in this respect was the government's decision of August 7, 1932, "On the Protection of the Property of State Enterprises, Collective Farms and Co-operatives and on the Strengthening of Public (Socialist) Property". The decision stressed that public property—collective farm co-operative property, and the property of the whole people—was the foundation of the Soviet system, that it was sacred and inviolable. The struggle against the plunderers of public property was declared "the primary duty of the organs of Soviet power". The decision was an important step in the development of the collective farm system.

The economic essence of the collective farm movement was the formation, development and consolidation of collective socialist property. Collective property took the form of indivisible collective farm assets. In 1932 they amounted to 4,700 million rubles—an impressive sum in those days. The greater part of this sum was taken up by fixed assets, i.e., by production premises, agricultural implements, machines, draught animals, and cattle. During the five-year period these assets were increased elevenfold (from 200 million to 2,200 million rubles). At the end of the five-year period 46 per cent of the indivisible assets were made up of accumulations raised by collective farms from the annual deductions from profits. In 1932 some 600,000 rubles were deducted from cash profits alone and placed in indivisible assets. The deductions were particularly important because they were the direct result of collective labour. This portion of the indivisible assets was growing, while the relative share of the initially socialised property was falling.

One of the most complicated tasks in building the collective farm system was the organisation of collective labour. It took quite a time to find the best forms for doing this. Even the Model Rules of Agricultural Artels, which were published on March 1, 1930, did not determine precisely the forms of organisation and remuneration of labour since there was no precedent for them. Experience had to be accumulated during the practical construction of socialism.

The organisational principles of collective labour, which are so familiar today, were elaborated by a process of argu-

ment, inquiry and selection. For instance, there was no common principle for setting up production teams. At first preference was given to special teams for ploughing, harrowing, sowing or other specific work. Once the work was done, the teams were disbanded and new teams with new people and implements were set up in their place. Soon it became clear that this led to irresponsibility—too many cooks spoiled the broth. The so-called combined teams were also unsatisfactory. They were set up for one season (for instance, for spring ploughing, harrowing and sowing), while the farm work in the succeeding season (hay-making, sheafing, stacking, thrashing) was done by other teams. That also entailed irresponsibility in the use of draught animals and implements, and in the employment of manpower. Worse still was the practice of forming teams of neighbours.

The solution was eventually found by drawing on the experience of a prevalent socialist industry. It proved best to allot manpower, draught animals and implements for the whole cycle of production.

At first there were few production teams. Their number only began to increase in 1932.

There was no common principle of remuneration either. Work was paid for according to the number of "mouths to feed", working days or work rates. The backward people were provoked by kulaks to support the system of pay according to the number of "mouths to feed". This principle ignored the quantity and quality of work. Advanced collective farmers were not satisfied with it. Their own experience and the Party's instructions told them that piece-work was the most suitable form of remuneration.

By the end of 1931 nearly three-fourths of the collective farms adopted the piece-work principle. True, it was not easy at first to establish the concrete output standards. But the experience accumulated by peasants was useful, and adjustments were made in the course of work and emulation.

The piece-work principle was reinforced by the introduction of the work-day as a unit of labour and income distribution.

The work-day was introduced in the artels, when the collective farmers had understood its mechanism. Today all

forms of remuneration in collective farms resemble the wages system current in state enterprises, but in that period the work-day greatly helped to organise collective production and to strengthen discipline.

LIQUIDATION OF THE KULAKS AS A CLASS

Prior to mass collectivisation the Soviet state's policy was to restrict the exploiter tendencies of the kulaks and gradually oust them from economic and public life. Mass collectivisation generated a new social situation in the countryside, and so the liquidation of the capitalist economy was placed on the agenda.

The kulaks were deprived of the right to own machinery; their property and wealth acquired by the exploitation of others was confiscated. These measures helped to root out capitalism in the countryside and to destroy the system of exploitation of man by man. This was the meaning of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class. The ways and means of doing this depended on actual conditions, on the correlation of forces and, above all, on the behaviour of the kulaks themselves. In the Soviet Union the kulaks launched an open and ruthless struggle against the collective farms and socialist reorganisation of agriculture.

Kulaks resorted to various forms of struggle. M. I. Kalinin pointed out: "In general, we can establish three stages in the development of the kulak's struggle against collective farms. The first stage is when peasants begin to think about organising a collective farm. At this stage the kulak conducts a rabid campaign against collective farms. He spreads all kinds of stories about the collective farm being the reincarnation of serfdom.

"The second stage is when the collective farm has been organised in spite of kulak propaganda. This is when the kulak resorts to terror and arson.

"The third stage is when the collective farm has become strong and is functioning extremely well. This is when the kulak 'discards wrath for mercy' and himself rushes into the collective farm to subvert it from within."

The kulaks found an active ally in the church. It was a formidable force which relied on the cultural backwardness and religious feelings of large sections of the rural population. The clergy used amboes and pulpits in churches and mosques to pronounce anathemas against the collective farms.

The anti-collective farm propaganda and threats were followed by open terror. The greatest class struggle since the revolution and the Civil War was unfolding in the countryside. Collectivisation cost many lives. Newspapers reported almost daily on the murders and attempts on the lives of village activists. The kulaks declared a real war on the collective farms.

They set fire to the offices of village Soviets and collective farm boards and to the homes of activist farmers. Nearly 30,000 cases of arson were registered in the rural areas of the RSFSR in 1929 alone. Nearly one hundred villages were on fire every day. Investigating authorities found that most of the cases were plain arson.

Illegal counter-revolutionary organisations were planning armed uprisings in many districts. In the North Caucasus, Siberia, the Volga region and the Central black-earth zone kulaks planned revolts and stored up weapons which they had concealed during the Civil War.

In a number of instances they established direct contact with whiteguards who had emigrated abroad, and through them, with foreign capitalists.

Counting on intervention by Western countries, the kulaks went over to mass action; they attempted to stage anti-Soviet uprisings and revolts.

However, hopes of a counter-revolution came to nothing. The peasants did not stage a general revolt; there were not even any major uprisings. At the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930 the kulaks succeeded in provoking a few actions against collective farms and Soviet power, but those were isolated uprisings which were quickly put down with the active assistance of poor and middle peasants.

By acting outside the law the kulaks sealed their own fate. The sharpness of the class struggle compelled the working people and the Soviet state to liquidate the kulaks by "dispossessing" them, i.e., by confiscating their property and

isolating kulak families administratively from other peasants.

In the summer of 1929 the Party's Central Committee approved the decision of the Territorial Party Committee in the North Caucasus to forbid the entry of kulaks into collective farms. The Central Committee's November plenary meeting made an appeal to intensify the struggle against the village bourgeoisie, "obstructing and preventing in every possible way the attempts of kulaks to infiltrate the collective farms". This resolution was the first step towards solving the problem of liquidating the kulak class in general. In December 1929 and January 1930 the Party's Central Committee examined the problem in detail, and it was found necessary to liquidate the kulaks as a class on the basis of full collectivisation. A range of official attitudes to the various strata of kulaks were worked out, according to their attitude to Soviet power and their economic position.

It is noteworthy that long before the appropriate laws were passed, the peasants had begun to root out the kulaks.

This policy was expressed in the decision "The Rate of Collectivisation and State Measures to Assist for the Development of Collective Farms" which the Party's Central Committee adopted on January 5, 1930.

The decision of the Party's Central Committee "On Measures for the Liquidation of Kulak Households in Regions of Full Collectivisation" (January 30, 1930) and the decision of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On Measures for the Consolidation of the Socialist Reorganisation of Agriculture and for the Struggle Against Kulaks" (February 1, 1930) gave detailed instructions on how to dispossess the kulaks. The law on land-leasing was abolished in areas of full collectivisation; it was forbidden to employ hired labour on private farms (exception was made for middle peasants with special permission from and under the control of local organs of government). However, this time the matter did not end with an economic blow to the kulaks. Instructions were given to confiscate all means of production (cattle, seed, implements, farm premises, etc.) from kulaks in areas of full collectivisation. Thus the Soviet state decided to liquidate the kulak class by means of expropriation.

In addition kulaks were expelled from villages. The decision of February 1 stressed that the territorial and regional organs of power in areas of full collectivisation had the right to apply "all necessary measures in the struggle against the kulaks, ranging from the confiscation of their property to expulsion".

The Party and government decisions, therefore, crystallised the accumulated experience in the struggle against the kulaks. These documents gave legal expression to and spelled out the Party's graduated policy towards the various groups of kulaks after their expropriation. It was stressed, for instance, that a considerate approach was necessary towards kulak households which included former servicemen, workers or employees of Soviet organisations.

The kulaks were divided into three categories. The organisers and perpetrators of acts of terror who were actively engaged in anti-Soviet work were arrested and sentenced to various terms depending on the nature of their crime. Their property was confiscated and their families were exiled to remote places. This was the first and most dangerous group of kulaks (nearly 10 per cent of kulak households). The counter-revolutionary kulak upper crust was liquidated irrespective of the level of collectivisation in the given locality. The other kulak households could be liquidated only in districts of full collectivisation. This group, which comprised approximately a quarter of the kulak households, included the most prosperous kulaks who resisted the Soviet state less vigorously but who were outright exploiters and who, consequently, supported the counter-revolutionaries. Their property was confiscated and they were sent with their families to remote regions.

The third and the most numerous category comprised the remaining kulaks. After the expropriation of their property they were resettled on new lands within the boundaries of the administrative regions or territories where they lived. In some areas there was a fourth category of kulaks who were resettled nearby but outside the collective farm zones.

In determining the measures against the kulaks, the Party's Central Committee stressed that the measures "must be *organically linked* with the really mass collective farm movement of poor and middle peasants and they must be

an inseparable component of the process of full collectivisation. The Central Committee resolutely condemns the substitution of crude dispossession of kulaks for genuine mass collectivisation of which some cases have been reported. The necessary administrative measures for the dispossession of kulaks can only result in the successful solution of the tasks of socialist reorganisation of agriculture and liquidation of kulaks set by the Party if they are combined with the broad organisation of the poor peasants and farmhands and the consolidation of poor and middle peasants on the basis of collectivisation."

In practice, the dispossession of kulaks was carried out on the following pattern. Headquarters for the struggle against kulaks were set up in territories, regions and districts. They were headed by local Party and Soviet officials. Active Party members worked out plans for the implementation of Party decisions in local conditions, determined the number of kulaks to be dispossessed and expelled, etc. The same questions were considered during plenary meetings and special sessions of the executive committees of local Soviets and meetings of public organisations. Then village Party cells and village Soviets, which received corresponding instructions, established the actual number of kulak households and drew up references for each which served as the basis for placing them in one or another category for dispossession. At the same time, active Party members and Soviet executives conducted a mass campaign in the countryside. The conferences of primary Party and Komsomol cells were followed by conferences of the poor, farmhands and collective farmers. Finally, general village meetings were called. They examined and endorsed the lists of kulaks drawn up by village Soviets.

The decisions on dispossession were carried out by special committees under the village Soviets. They were made up of village Communists and activist farmers and farmhands. The committees fixed the value of kulak property, drew up inventory lists, confiscated the property and decided what to do with it. The village Soviets were made responsible for the preservation of the confiscated property. It was divided into two parts. The first went to cover kulak debts to the state and co-operatives, and the second was transfer-

red as indivisible assets to collective farms for covering membership dues by poor peasants and farmhands who joined collective farms. A portion of the confiscated property was given over to poor peasants. The kulak houses, which were usually quite big, were given to schools, libraries or boards of collective farms. Sometimes these houses were given over to the most needy peasants. But the main portion of kulak property (farm machines, draught animals, cattle, seed, farm premises) was socialised. A portion of the expropriated property, draught animals and implements went into a special fund for resettling the kulaks.

From the end of 1929 to the middle of 1930 some 320,000 kulak households (less than a third of the total number on the eve of collectivisation) were dispossessed. Their property, estimated to be worth more than 400 million rubles, was confiscated and handed over mostly to new collective farms which were then recruiting new members. By May 1930 half of the collective farms in the country had received property of former kulaks. This was tangible assistance. More than 34 per cent of the indivisible assets and nearly 15 per cent of the fixed assets in collective farms were made up of a confiscated kulak property.

Since conditions in the country varied considerably, the dispossession of the kulaks could not be completed at a stroke.

In 1931 the kulaks had been liquidated in regions of collectivisation of group one precedence; practically no kulaks were left in regions of group two precedence. In regions of group three precedence the kulaks were expropriated mostly during the summer of 1931 and after. In 1932 the Party's Central Committee ordered that an end be put to the mass dispossession of kulaks. The local authorities were instructed to expel, on an individual basis, only counter-revolutionaries.

By the end of the First Five-Year Plan the exploiter households had disappeared in most regions. However the process was prolonged in some places due to specific local conditions. At the end of 1932 there were still 60,000-70,000 kulak households. The slogan for the restriction of kulak households, instead of the liquidation of the class of kulaks, remained in force in the backward regions of Tajikistan

until 1933, and even until 1934 in the mountainous regions. Kulaks in Uzbekistan remained until 1934; in the mountainous regions of Daghestan they were expropriated only at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan.

The scope of the dispossession of kulaks in the acute class struggle proved to be greater than originally expected. In January 1930 it was laid down that the number of households (including kulak households in the third category) should not exceed 3 to 5 per cent of the total number of peasant households in the grain-producing regions, and 2-3 per cent in all the other regions. M. I. Kalinin, who visited a number of regions in 1930, noted that "in 95 out of 100 cases the organs of power are compelled to exert a restraining influence in the dispossession of kulaks".

RE-EDUCATION OF FORMER KULAKS

In carrying out the dispossession of kulaks the Soviet state counted on re-educating the former exploiter classes.

It was a lengthy and complicated process. The Soviet state provided a definite minimum of sustenance for the settlers and gave them jobs. They were sent to work in such key sectors as non-ferrous metallurgy, ore-mining (gold, platinum, coal), construction, etc. However, the majority of them were sent to work in the lumber industry, particularly in the North. Many former kulaks also worked in fishery and handicraft artels.

Their work in state industry was of particular significance. Former kulaks were encouraged to take part in public activities and to join trade unions. They had good earnings. Gradually these real factors began to make a greater impression on the minds of former kulaks, particularly of young people, than the grudges and embitterment which resulted from the dispossession.

The same process was in evidence in agriculture where a little less than half of the former kulaks were working. The state created the necessary conditions for their work; the kulak settlers were provided with horses and implements on terms common to all non-collectivised peasants. In 1930,

for instance, they were supplied on credit with tens of thousands of farm implements (ploughs, scythes, pitch-forks, etc.) and thousands of tons of seed (barley, oats, wheat, etc.). On the government's instructions consumer co-operatives sold them carpenter's and fitter's tools, fishing tackle, hunting gear, etc.

In addition to credits, the state increased its investments in the settlers' districts for building production premises, and cultural, educational, medical and communal establishments. At the end of 1931 there were nearly 650 hospitals, outpatient clinics and medical-aid stations, more than 1,000 bath-houses, and nearly 1,700 schools. In the summer of 1931 the government decided to set up co-operatives for kulaks employed in agriculture, fishing, hunting, handicrafts, etc. These agricultural artels were subject to special regulations and not to the Model Rules of Collective Farms. Their number was increasing: at the end of the First Five-Year Plan 59.6 per cent of former kulak households in Siberia and 62 per cent in the North which were not occupied in industry had been merged into co-operatives.

At first there was a big difference between the artels of former kulaks and collective farms. This could not be otherwise because the composition and origin of their members were different, as was their economic position—the state was in charge of the means of production and the output in the artels of former kulaks. This gave rise to other differences in life between regular collective farms and settlers' artels. At first the principles of self-government, so typical of co-operative organisations, were not applied in the special artels. There was no electoral system; the executives were appointed by the state. The state also appointed its authorised agents who used the boards of such artels as consultative organs.

In time, however, the artels evolved into regular collective farms.

This process began almost immediately after the artels had been organised and when the principles of remuneration were evolved. "Wage-levelling" was discarded there, as elsewhere in the Soviet economy. The experience of collective farms suggested that the most convenient form of accounting and remunerating labour was the work-day unit.

The state permitted the special settlers to have their own private lots of land. They were given credits. Each family had the right to buy for cash or on credit a horse, a cow, a few sheep, pigs, goats, poultry, etc. Gradually, all distinctions between the private lots of special settlers and those of collective farmers disappeared.

The forms of management were changing more slowly but in the same direction. The state always appointed team leaders and board members from amongst the settlers; soon it began to promote them to executive positions in the artels.

At the end of the 1930s the social and economic evolution of former kulak households was complete. In September 1938 the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR granted the statute of regular collective farms to the artels of special settlers. Thus, the former kulak households had traversed in less than ten years an exceptionally difficult and uphill road—from labour duty to unchartered artels and, finally, to collective farms.

The economic independence of settlers' artels was bolstered thanks to the state's encouragement of production and extensive educational work. Gradually the former kulaks changed their attitude to collective labour. As a result, the state was justified in alleviating their life and work. The two processes were interconnected. In July 1931 and in May 1934 the Central Executive Committee of the USSR passed decrees on the procedure of reinstatement of former kulaks in their civil rights.

The labour re-education of former kulaks furnished many examples of the efficiency of this method.

History knows few instances of such a transformation of a whole class of society.

IV. THE CHANGING FACE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

THE VILLAGE ACTIVISTS

The transformation of a small-scale and fragmented peasant economy into socialist agricultural production was one of the most outstanding accomplishments of the Soviet

First Five-Year Plan. Mass collectivisation completely changed the principles of agricultural production, the face of the countryside, its social structure, the cultural level and technical training of the rural population, and the life and psychology of peasants.

The peasants became politically more active, the number of activist villagers increased. The revolutionary reforms in the countryside were directed by Communists.

The organisational, political and ideological consolidation of Party organisations in villages was of great importance for the victory of the collective farm system. From May 1929 to May 1930 the Party checked and purged its organisations in line with the decision of its 16th All-Union Conference. As a result the organisation of village Party cells was improved though the number of Communists in those cells was reduced by 15.4 per cent.

Soon, however, the numerical strength of Party organisations in the countryside was restored. As of January 1930 there were 343,942 Communists in the countryside; a year later the figure was 516,897, and by July 1, 1931 it had increased to 654,628.

Nearly 70 per cent of the 25,000 urban workers who had been sent to the countryside were Communists, and 10 per cent Komsomol members. They reinforced and improved the work of Party and Komsomol organisations in villages. In the first quarter of 1930 the number of Communists in villages increased by nearly 40,000, half of them coming from the ranks of the 25,000-strong worker detachment. Thus industrial workers accounted for a high percentage of village Communists. They were politically mature and ideologically strong people. They greatly reinvigorated the work of village Party organisations.

The Party also recruited into its ranks advanced peasants. Most of them were poor. They were very active politically—more than 70 per cent of them were engaged in public work. In 1930 collective farmers accounted for more than 20 per cent of the people who joined the Party; in 1931 the percentage was much higher. The majority of village Communists became collective farmers. At the beginning of 1930 the village Party cells consisted of 25.2 per cent collective farmers, 23.1 per cent non-collectivised peasants, 20.5 per

cent workers, and 31.2 per cent office employees. The percentage on July 1 of the same year was: collective farmers—60; non-collectivised peasants—2.8; workers—14.5; and office employees—23.7.

The qualitative and quantitative growth of the Party cells was accompanied by structural changes in the Party village organisations. Many of them went over to the productional principle of organisation. On July 1, 1929, nearly 90 per cent of Party cells and candidate groups were organised on the territorial principle; by 1932 only 18 per cent of Party village cells of this type were left, while 66.4 per cent of the cells functioned in collective farms, and the rest in state farms and MTS.

The Party succeeded in raising a numerous army of active peasants in the course of socialist reorganisation. This army rallied and grew stronger around Party organisations.

In the middle of 1930 there were approximately 4.5 million non-Communist peasant activists in the Russian Federation. This number included 1,448,000 deputies to village Soviets, 300,000 members of farmhand and poor peasants' groups, 500,000 agricultural agents, 100,000 representatives of primary co-operatives, 1,160,000 members of co-operative elected bodies, 420,000 members of the boards of collective farms, and 600,000 officials of peasant mutual assistance committees. The Party and the state educated these activists and summarised the great experience which they had accumulated in the struggle for a socialist countryside. In 1929 and the first half of 1930 some 2.5 million village activists completed various short-term political, agrotechnical and other courses.

Deputies of village Soviets and members of their various sections and deputies' groups represented the numerically strongest force of peasant activists. The Party resolutely denounced the Left-wing theories about the "withering away" of Soviets in villages and the transfer of their functions to the collective farms. It regarded the village Soviets as organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the countryside, and it therefore employed them as an effective weapon in building socialism.

General elections to the Soviets were held during the winter of 1930/31. The electoral campaign was carefully

prepared. The urban Soviets assisted in conducting the campaign in the countryside.

The elections showed that the peasants had become politically more active: 79.4 per cent of the peasantry took part in the elections; 33.6 per cent of the deputies to the Soviets and 52.7 per cent of the chairmen of village Soviets were collective farmers.

The Soviets were genuine mass organisations of power. Millions of activists participated in the work of sections and deputies' groups. Every village Soviet had three or four sections.

Groups of the poor, which were set up on the Party's instructions in various fields of economic, state and public life in the countryside, accomplished a great deal during the most acute moments of collectivisation.

Village activists spread the Party's ideas among the peasant masses. They had one thing in common—a strong belief in the force of the Soviet public. This belief had nothing to do with the old submission to the will of the community run by the kulak; it was the conviction, bred by the Party, that the collective was a great force. Though many of the village activists were illiterate, they quickly realised the strength of the collective. Many talented people came out of the ranks of village activists.

BREAK-UP OF THE OLD WAY OF LIFE. CULTURAL PROGRESS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Collectivisation made an impact not only on the economic and social structure, but on the whole way of life in the countryside. Even the outward appearance of the village changed. The countryside was dotted with estates of MTS and state farms, garages, repair shops, silos, cultural, educational and communal establishments.

Collective farms were building dairies, granaries, clubs, etc. Farmsteads were also changing in appearance. Formerly, their principal designation was not for dwelling but for natural small-scale production with its obsolete seclusion,

and versatility. But when the peasant joined the collective farm, he found that he no longer had any need for production premises, such as stables (draught animals were socialised), threshing barns and barns for storing crops (grain was threshed on the collective farm's threshing floor). The farmer began to pay more attention to living quarters; he wanted to make his home more comfortable.

Gradually tableware, clocks, mirrors, gramophones and other manufactured wares formerly seen only in cities made their way into the villages.

Factory-made fabrics, clothes and footwear began to replace homespun yarns and bast shoes.

The changes particularly affected the life of people living in mountain districts and in the East and the North. There were even changes in architectural style. Wooden and brick houses with glass windows facing the street began to rise side by side with mud houses, a cave dwellings in the villages in the mountains, and tents in nomad regions. The new buildings were intended for the boards of collective farms, schools, medical stations, hospitals, shops and trading posts (in the North). They grew into community centres and points around which the nomads settled.

Old customs persisted, of course, and often the old and the new customs intertwined. The nomads, for instance, at first retained their old habits even after moving into settlements. They slept on the floor and used small tables for meals. Many of them kept the tents near at hand and lived there from time to time.

Thus collective production was changing the way of life. It gave birth to new requirements, and the means for satisfying them, and also changed traditional relations between people.

Living standards were rising thanks to the organisation of public catering, assistance to the disabled and invalids, bonuses, and new cultural and communal establishments. In the spring of 1931 nearly 40 per cent of collective farms had canteens in villages and in the fields; one-third of the collective farms had nurseries, and one-sixth of them had kindergartens.

Women and young people were paid by the collective and state farms according to their labour. Thus, their contribu-

tion to the family's welfare became tangible and independent of the arbitrary rule of the head of the family.

The gradual emancipation of women from household work and their participation in production was bolstered by the expansion of the network of children's institutions, medical establishments, shops and bakeries. Many women became talented leaders of collective farms and efficient workers.

Young people began to play a tremendous role in agricultural production and public life. They became the most qualified and, consequently, the best-paid and socially active workers. The cultural level was rising.

In 1930 illiterate men accounted for more than 20 per cent, and illiterate women, for 54 per cent of the able-bodied rural population in the 16 to 60 age group. In some regions (e.g., Central Asia) most of the population remained illiterate. The Soviet state and public launched a general campaign to stamp out illiteracy. At the end of 1928 the Komsomol announced the All-Union cultural campaign. Soon ABC books, pencils and paper were in great demand in the countryside.

The organisation of the collective farms and the introduction of new farm machinery greatly stimulated the rising cultural and technical standards in villages.

The decisive step for the elimination of illiteracy was taken during the years of mass collectivisation. In 1929 nearly 1.7 million peasants attended primary classes; in 1930—5.6 million; in 1931—nearly 7.7 million; and in 1932—nearly 11.7 million. The last figure was the highest in the entire history of the cultural revolution in the Soviet Union.

The First Five-Year Plan for the elimination of illiteracy was exceeded. Originally it was planned to make 80 per cent of the population in the 16-35 age group literate in 1933; in fact almost the whole of this age group and the majority of the entire population became literate. Only 12 per cent of people aged between 8 and 50 were still illiterate in 1932.

The elimination of illiteracy was closely linked with the organisation of general primary education for children. The second half of 1930 marked the beginning of the nationwide transition to universal and compulsory primary education. Many primary schools appeared in the countryside. At the

end of the five-year plan there were nearly 140,000 of them—six times more than all the other schools put together. In 1931/32 these schools, including the schools for over-age children and the so-called forest schools, had more than 12 million pupils.

The seven-year schools with vocational training for children in collective farms had nearly two million pupils.

The libraries constituted another important link in the system of cultural and educational establishments. In 1931/32 there were more than 33,000 of them. The libraries served as clubs, and centres for the elimination of illiteracy and for political and educational work.

It is noteworthy that the peak of cultural work in the countryside coincided with the high point in the consolidation of collective farms. That the two processes were fully dependent on each other is borne out by the course of events in the Soviet countryside.

COLLECTIVE FARMERS

There were approximately 200,000 collective farms at the end of the First Five-Year Plan: 20 per cent of them were organised before mass collectivisation, nearly 26 per cent in 1930, 44 per cent in 1931, and more than 10 per cent in 1932. So, the majority of collective farms were set up between 1930 and 1932. The initial targets of collectivisation were exceeded by considerable margins. The USSR was transformed from a small-peasant country into a country of large-scale agriculture. Collective farmers became the principal producers of the most important farm products. Their share in the gross output of grain was rising—from 1.2 per cent in 1928, to 28.5 per cent in 1930, and nearly 67 per cent in 1933. In 1932 collective farms had on average more than 70 households and 434 hectares of ploughland. They were quite large enterprises in those days.

Collective farms and state farms were no longer isolated islands in a sea of individual farmsteads. The majority of

the peasantry had taken the road of socialism. 38 per cent of peasant households still remained outside collective farms, but the importance of small-commodity production was reduced. The spontaneous capitalist tendency in this mode of production was seriously weakened by the emancipation of peasants from the influence of kulaks (liquidation of kulaks, uprooting of capitalism in the countryside) and the consolidation of ties between non-collectivised peasants and the socialist economy (contact sales of farm products to the state, assistance by state farms and collective farms to non-collectivised peasants, intensification of mass political work by Party and Soviet organisations in the countryside, etc.).

All this spelled a radical change in the character of the Soviet peasantry. The old class structure was disappearing. Prior to mass collectivisation there had been four principal social groups of peasants—the village bourgeoisie (kulaks), the rural proletariat and semi-proletariat (farmhands, poor peasants), small-commodity peasants (middle peasants) and collective farmers. In some backward non-Russian regions there were other social groups still at the stage of feudal, tribal or patriarchal relations.

During collectivisation private ownership of the basic means of agricultural production was gradually abolished; the collective farmers who had constituted a minority of the rural population only a short time before became one of the principal classes of Soviet society. Of exceptional importance was the mass entry of middle peasants into the collective farms because they constituted the nucleus of the non-collectivised peasantry which personified the dying class of small producers. Thus the former antagonistic duality of the peasant was overcome—he remained a toiler but ceased to be a private owner. The farmhands and the poor and middle peasants who joined collective farms became collective owners of the artel property. In this way the economic foundation for the existence of different class groups among the peasantry was destroyed. Collective farmers were given equal opportunities for raising their well-being in accordance with the quantity and quality of their labour.

So the social group of collective farmers in the years of mass collectivisation was the nucleus from which the single

class of socialist peasantry emerged. Its social essence is expressed in collective labour based on collective, or co-operative property and the rising level of the socialisation of production and mechanisation.

While relying on the support of collective farmers, the Soviet government strengthened its alliance with poor and middle peasants and urged them to join collective farms. The Soviet government consistently expropriated the kulaks as a class on the basis of full collectivisation. Thus the countryside gradually moved from class antagonism to genuine social peace and political unity.

This does not mean, of course, that the collective farm peasantry was a homogeneous mass. Remnants of former social groups were still there. Sometimes the amount of socialised property of each household was taken into consideration when it came to the distribution of incomes. For this purpose the collective farms inaugurated in 1931/32 special funds into which 2 to 5 per cent of the gross incomes were transferred. But the important thing was that collective labour was the main source of income for the collective farmers. This gave birth to qualitatively new social groups within the peasantry which were distinguished by the character of their labour (machine operators, etc.). At first the old and the new coexisted, and the social structure of the collective farm village was not completely homogeneous. But what mattered most was that social antagonism vanished and socialist relations triumphed.

The collective farmer had his own plot of land which played an important part in his life. At the end of the five-year plan an average household had 0.3 hectares of ploughland; more than 60 per cent of collective farmers kept their own cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.

Many Party and government decisions stressed the importance of family farmsteads of raising the living standards of collective farmers. The Party gave instructions to take measures against the Left-wing tendencies in some regions to curtail the farmsteads; moreover, socialised cattle was partially distributed, when necessary, among the collective farmers to help them organise their own farmsteads. On the whole, collective farmers had more cattle than the collective farms themselves.

The decision on collective farm trade, which the Party and the government adopted in May 1932, was of great importance. Collective farms and collective farmers were permitted to sell in the market surplus products after the fulfilment of the delivery plans. They could sell the products at market prices; the proceeds were tax free. So the collective farmers began to bring potatoes, milk, vegetables and other products to the markets.

Private-ownership economy was characterised by class antagonism and by the merciless exploitation of toiling peasants by kulaks. It was not so with collective and state farms. They eliminated social and economic inequality and laid the foundation for raising the living standards of poor and middle peasants. The system of collective and state farms destroyed the social and economic foundation for the stratification of the peasantry; it unearthed the causes which generated hopeless poverty on the one hand, and wealth accumulated by exploitation, on the other.

Collective farms helped poor peasants to reach the level of middle peasants in a very short time. The peasantry was liberated from the kulak yoke. Formerly each family had fought single-handed against crop failures, fires and other disasters. If they lost the battle they simply left their huts and went begging because nobody came to their assistance. In the collective farms everybody came to the assistance in case of need. Each farmer knew that in times of difficulty he could rely on the collective's support.

Gradually, the new economic relations made a conscious collective worker out of the individual peasant. The ideology and psychology of an increasing number of peasants was coming into harmony with the objective conditions of socialist production. These peasants formed the nucleus of the collective farm; they were its driving force.

The triumph of collectivisation did not entail, of course, immediate and full solution to the problem of turning former individual peasants into model workers in socialist production, nor did it make all collective farms efficient enterprises overnight.

The organisation of collective farms marked only the beginning of the profound socialist re-education of peasants. The peasants who joined the collective farms brought along

their means of production and their private-ownership psychology. One of the most lengthy and contradictory processes in the socialist re-education of peasants is the assertion of the collectivist attitude towards labour and public property. The evolution of collective farms was very complicated. Experience was lacking; there was a shortage of trained personnel and machinery; and the weather was frequently unfavourable. In 1930, for instance, many people started leaving the collective farms but a good harvest helped to bolster the farms. Next year the situation was reversed: there was an influx of people into the collective farms, but the latter were hit by crop failures in many regions. The grain-purchasing campaign was very strained.

All this, of course, affected the level of collectivisation. In the summer of 1931 the influx diminished, and at the end of the same year and the beginning of 1932 some people even began to leave the collective farms.

The state took vigorous action to overcome the difficulties. Food and seed were rushed to the collective farms which had suffered from crop failures. The quotas of purchases of grain, meat, etc., were reduced.

As a result, people stopped leaving the collective farms. A new influx began. At the end of 1932 collective farms incorporated 62.4 per cent of peasant households in the country, i.e., nearly as many as at the beginning of the year. In the following year the influx was a record high for the whole period of the First Five-Year Plan.

The ousting of capitalist elements from all fields of the economy was the most remarkable achievement of the socialist reorganisation of agriculture during the First Five-Year Plan. A decisive step was taken towards the eradication of the mixed economy and for laying a strong economic foundation for the socialist society. The Programme of the CPSU states: "The introduction in the Soviet countryside of large-scale socialist farming meant a great revolution in economic relations, in the entire way of life of the peasantry. Collectivisation for ever delivered the countryside from kulak bondage, from class differentiation, ruin and poverty."¹

¹ *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 458.

V. A NEW WAY OF LIFE AND WORK

THE FIRST ALL-UNION CONGRESS
OF COLLECTIVE FARM SHOCK WORKERS

By the end of the First Five-Year Plan the majority of individual peasants, comprising nearly 15 million households, had joined the collective farms. In the principal agricultural regions collective farms incorporated more than three-quarters of the peasantry. The village bourgeoisie—the kulaks—was deprived of its sources of exploitation and profit almost throughout the whole country.

The collective farm system, however, was not complete. It resembled the framework of a building. Many collective farms were small and economically weak. They were short of trained personnel; the MTS catered for only a third of the collective farms. The socialist principle of production organisation had not yet been fully implemented.

The lack of experience was felt everywhere. The most important problems of organising the socialist economy had to be tackled during mass collectivisation.

The collective farm system came into being in the course of a ruthless class struggle; the liquidation of kulaks as a class inevitably added fuel to the fire. The class enemies used every conceivable method in their struggle against collective farms; they took advantage of all the difficulties, errors and mistakes.

Some of the most serious difficulties stemmed from the fact that peasants who had joined the collective farms still retained the habits and conceptions of petty owners and individualists.

A typical instance came to light during a survey in the collective farms of Leningrad Region in the early thirties. "Quarrels and bad feeling are not infrequent among collective farmers because of the employment of their former property, mostly horses," wrote one of surveyors. "The former owners continued to regard the horses as their own. When the owner sees that his horse is tired or that it is made

to work more than other horses, he protests vehemently, and it all ends in a rumpus."

The difficulties facing socialist reforms in the countryside were so great that most of the collective farms did not succeed in ensuring the efficient work of their social economy—agriculture and animal husbandry—in the course of mass collectivisation. The most important task was to strengthen the organisation and economy of collective farms and, on this basis, raise agricultural production and living standards.

The tasks for the new stage of socialist reorganisation in the countryside were set down in the directives of the 17th Party Conference for the elaboration of the Second Five-Year Economic Plan of the USSR for 1933-1937. The principal task was to complete the socialist reorganisation of agriculture, to raise the yields of crops on collective and state farms, and to increase the productivity of cattle-breeding. It was planned to double the volume of agricultural production. The Party wanted to make all farmers prosperous and to educate them; it stressed that this could only be achieved by strengthening the organisation and economy of collective farms and by re-educating peasants along socialist lines.

The new tasks were discussed by the First All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers in February 1933 in Moscow. The congress was attended by 1,513 delegates, including 890 (58.8 per cent) rank-and-file collective farmers, 433 (28.6 per cent) team-leaders, and 190 (12.6 per cent) chairmen of collective farms. The collective farms sent to the congress trusted fighters for the collective farm system, shock workers and advanced farmers. More than a half of the delegates (54 per cent) were not members of the Party, 40 per cent were Party members or candidates, and 6 per cent were Komsomol members. The delegates represented 45 nationalities.

Reports were made by the People's Commissar for Agriculture Y. A. Yakovlev, and by the Secretary of Komsomol A. V. Kosarev. The debates continued for three days. More than 40 delegates took part including J. V. Stalin, M. I. Kalinin, K. Y. Voroshilov, S. M. Budenny, V. M. Molotov and other Party and government leaders. Representatives of advanced collective farms related their experience.

The delegates appealed to all collective farmers to declare war on inefficiency, sabotage and theft; to strengthen labour discipline and eradicate slackness and absenteeism.

The decisions taken by the congress were discussed by district, regional and territorial conferences of collective farmers in February and March 1933.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENTS IN THE MTS

There were not enough organisers in the countryside to help collective farms become stronger. In 1932 only a sixth of the collective farms had Party cells. The ideological and political level of village Communists was not high, many of them having no experience in Party and political work. Quite often Communists and Komsomol members were promoted to the posts of accountants and book-keepers and lost contact with production. In 1932 only 15 to 20 per cent of village Communists were working in the fields or dairies. Party's Central Committee and the Central Control Commission decided to help the countryside by setting up political departments in MTS and state farms. The chief of the political department in the MTS was concurrently made deputy director of the MTS, he shared with the director responsibility for the fulfilment of production plans. The political departments were subordinated to the Central Committee and special political organs.

The staff in the political department was small—only six people: the chief, two deputy chiefs, two assistants for work among youth and women, and a newspaper editor.

Some 17,000 Communists were sent to work in the political departments of the MTS; 40 per cent of them had a record of at least 10 years of Party membership. Nearly one half of the chiefs and a quarter of the staffs had received training at universities or institutes mostly in the field of politics. Many of the others had a secondary education.

Most of the political departments began to work in March and April 1933. They immediately started solving urgent economic problems, organised the supply of seed to collective

farms and fuel and spares to the MTS. The staffs of political departments studied the economic situation in the farms, helped the artels to organise production, and did a great deal of educational work.

This is what Zuyev, a collective farmer, said about the work of a political department: "We took a liking to the political department almost from the outset. Its workers are very much aware of the needs of our collective farm and they always give us sound and practical advice. We meet them in the cattle-yard, in the stables and in the fields. . . . They come to our homes, they chat with us as friends during lunch-breaks in the fields, and teach us how to correct our mistakes. We feel that the workers of the political department have a special place in their hearts for the affairs of our collective farm."

The peasants went to the political departments with their problems or sent letters.

The political departments relied on Communists and non-Party activist peasants. At the end of 1933 there were 30,000 Party cells in collective farms, 20,000 groups of candidate-members, and 22,000 Party and Komsomol groups.

The political departments placed Communists in key positions in teams and dairies. It was not an easy matter because some Communists had no training for these jobs, some did not want to leave their posts, and quite a few simply did not understand the necessity of this measure. But the difficulties were overcome, and at the end of 1933 70 to 80 per cent of Communists were directly engaged in production. The resolutions made by regional and territorial Party Committees noted that Communists had penetrated all units of production at all levels. Having mobilised the collective farm Communists for production, the political departments turned field teams and dairies into an arena of mass political work.

The workers of political departments devoted much energy to raising the level of socialist emulation, increasing its scope, organising the system of reporting and checking on the results, encouraging the winners and spreading their experience.

In the spring of 1933 emulation in the collective farms was widespread, the average number of shock workers per collective farm served by the MTS increased from 9 to 20.

Shock work acquired new features. The collective farm shock workers cared for public property, strictly observed labour discipline, overfulfilled work quotas, made suggestions for increasing labour productivity and helped others. They were reliable assistants of Party organisations and political departments. The political departments promoted activists to executive positions as team leaders, managers of production and chairmen of collective farms. In one and a half years of activity, the political departments promoted to executive posts more than 250,000 collective farmers, nearly 30,000 of whom were elected chairmen.

A great role in boosting production was played by quality control commissions which were known in many places as "teams of the old guards". They were first set up in the autumn of 1933 on the initiative of political departments in the North Caucasus. Quality controllers were selected from old and respected collective farmers well versed in production. They supervised field work, revealed shortcomings, taught young collective farmers how to work efficiently, and taught production techniques in study groups. Political departments arranged conferences of quality controllers. The old guards numbered tens of thousands of collective farmers.

Political departments saw to it that the collective farms fulfilled grain delivery plans on time. They also ousted hostile elements from MTS and collective farms.

In November 1934 the plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee summed up the work of political departments in the MTS. Labour discipline and organisation in collective farms had improved considerably. Farmers had begun to work more efficiently. More was paid for the work-day unit. All the preconditions for the development of agricultural production had been created. On these grounds the Central Committee decided that the political departments of the MTS had accomplished their mission.

So the political departments were reorganised into regular Party organs and merged with Party district committees. A new post—deputy director for political work—was instituted in all MTS.

THE SECOND ALL-UNION CONGRESS OF COLLECTIVE FARM SHOCK WORKERS. THE COLLECTIVE FARM MODEL RULES OF 1935

In November the plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee examined the question of The Model Rules of the Agricultural Artel. The Rules then in force had been adopted five years previously, at the beginning of 1930. At that time mass collectivisation was only in its infancy. Attention was focussed mainly on the terms on which individual farmers could be admitted to collective farms. There was practically no experience of managing large-scale public enterprises, and consequently the old Rules contained no instructions or recommendations. The organisation of labour, distribution of incomes, and the correlation between the public economy and the private property of the collective farmer were dealt with in general terms. This is why the plenary meeting decided that new rules should be drawn up and discussed by the congress of collective farmers.

The Second All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers opened in Moscow on February 11, 1935. It was attended by 1,443 delegates, most of whom had been elected at collective farm meetings. Among the delegates there were 362 rank-and-file farmers, 331 chairmen, 399 team leaders, and 60 managers of dairies who together represented 51 nationalities in the Soviet Union.

The draft of the new Rules which took due account of the experience accumulated by advanced collective farms was circulated among the delegates; the new rules were to legalise the new production relations in the countryside.

Of primary importance in the draft were land management and the utilisation of the means of production. Under the draft land would be handed over to the artels in perpetuum, and farmers leaving the artels would not to be allocated any land.

The Rules of 1930 did not specify the size of the private plot of land; farmers were allowed to keep a cow, small livestock and poultry. This had led to mistakes and abuses.

The draft of the new Rules would facilitate entry into collective farms. The Rules of 1930 did not allow kulaks

to be accepted into collective farms; the same applied to peasants who had slaughtered or sold cattle or squandered seed before entering the collective farms. In the draft of the new Rules those provisions were amended. An individual peasant who was joining the collective farm would be given a grace period of six years to pay by instalments the cost of his horse and seed if he sold the horse or squandered the seed two years before he had applied for membership. The children of kulaks would also be admitted if they had been occupied in socially useful work for a number of years as would those kulaks and members of their families who had worked honestly for not less than three years in places where they were resettled.

The congress discussed the basic aspects of the work of artels. According to the draft rules, the collective farms would raise the cultural level as well as the living standards of their members. The draft contained the main principles for the organisation of permanent production teams, piece-work, work quotas, and the distribution of incomes.

A commission of 167 members was created to draw up the final text. The commission took into account the suggestions made by the delegates and incorporated some of its own. One of the most important suggestions provided for the issuing of state acts to all artels on the lasting use of land. The commission fixed the size of family farmsteads (taking account of the wishes of the farmers). The area would vary from a quarter to half a hectare, but in certain districts would be as large as one hectare if the local conditions justified it. The commission had to redraft the provisions about farmers' private cattle. It divided agricultural districts into four groups: in districts producing grain, industrial crops and vegetables a family farmstead would keep a cow, two head of young cattle, a sow and litter, 10 sheep and goats, and an unlimited number of rabbits and poultry; in districts with developed animal husbandry, the norms would be approximately double; in districts with non-nomadic and semi-nomadic cattle-breeding, the norms would be four times higher; and in districts with nomadic cattle-breeding, 10 times higher.

On February 17, 1935, the Second Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers adopted the Model Rules of the Agri-

cultural Artel and instructed the collective farms to work out their own rules on its basis, discuss and endorse them at general meetings, and register the rules at the district executive committees of Soviets. The Party's Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR endorsed the new Model Rules, thereby giving them force of law.

The congress decided to arrange an All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow.

The new Model Rules were of great significance in consolidating and developing the collective farm system. The provisions they contained were elaborated from the experience of advanced collective farms and covered the most important aspects of the life and management of the public economy in the artels in conditions of the complete triumph of the collective farm system.

The principal provisions of the new Rules were incorporated in the 1936 Constitution of the USSR.

The adoption of the new Rules by collective farms boosted production, raised living standards, improved self-government, and completed the socialist reorganisation of agriculture. Socialist production relations obtained a strong footing in the countryside; they were confirmed by Soviet laws; the collective farm system which then took shape lasted until 1958.

The issuing of state acts for the use of land to collective farms began in the summer of 1935. The new Rules were adopted by the associations for the joint cultivation of land (which still remained in some non-Russian districts in the republics of the Soviet East) and the collective farms. In some of these districts (Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Tajikistan, Yakutia) the process was only completed in the early 1940s.

The implementation of the new Rules accelerated the progress of the collective farm movement. Individual peasants cast aside all their doubts.

In 1935 more than one million households joined collective farms; in 1936-37 another 1.5 million followed suit. As a result, the collective farms incorporated 93 per cent of peasant households, and more than 99 per cent of ploughland. The social reorganisation of the countryside was almost fully completed throughout the country.

The new Rules were of particular significance in consolidating and developing collective farm democracy. The general meeting of collective farmers—the supreme administrative organ in the *artel*—was given far-reaching rights. It elected the chairman and members of the board and the auditing committee, accepted new members, approved the reports by the board, and fixed the sums of money and the amount of products to be handed out per work-day. The decisions were taken on a majority basis by a show of hands. The most important questions had to be decided in the presence of a quorum of two-thirds of the membership. The board of the collective farm consisting of between 5 and 9 members was elected for a term of two years; it was fully responsible to the general meeting. It could be re-elected before the term expired if it failed to perform its duties or acted against the will of the general meeting.

The general meetings discussed questions of economy and many other problems. In the second half of 1936 the general meetings of collective farmers discussed the draft of the new Constitution of the USSR.

NEW MACHINERY. NEW PERSONNEL

Honest work was the slogan of the advanced farmers; their attitude to labour was based on mutual trust, assistance and comradesly solidarity. An important role in the formation of the new attitude to labour belonged to machines.

The Soviet state was doing its best to supply agriculture with new machinery. During the Second Five-Year Plan the tractor pool was trebled in size (from 148,500 to 456,000), the pool of harvesters was increased ninefold, and the number of lorries, elevenfold. Approximately three-quarters of these machines were concentrated in MTS (which served the production and technical needs of collective farms). During the Second Five-Year Plan the number of MTS increased annually by 674; by the end of 1937 their number had nearly doubled (5,828). In 1932 only one-third of the

collective farm land was cultivated by MTS; in 1935 they cultivated more than half and in 1937, 78 per cent of this land. Machine labour was gradually replacing manual labour.

The new machines required experienced drivers, operators and mechanics. The collective farms needed specialists and organisers of production.

Nearly four million workers, including more than 2.5 million mechanics, were trained for collective farms and MTS during the Second Five-Year Plan. Universities and technical colleges trained 136,000 specialists for agriculture.

Production personnel were trained at courses and at special schools, specialists coming mainly from the universities and technical colleges. Young peasants were predominant in agricultural technical colleges (75.5 per cent in 1937). In higher education they comprised 36.7 per cent of the student body; all the other students came from towns.

The higher professional efficiency of peasants, their desire to raise labour productivity and complete the socialist reorganisation of agriculture gave birth to the Stakhanov movement. The participants of this movement overfulfilled the work quotas by hundreds of per cent.

This is how K. A. Borin, a combine harvester operator at the Shteingart MTS in Krasnodar Territory, explained his great success at work: "When I first took my harvester across the familiar fields (that happened in 1934), my joy knew no bounds. At the same time I felt a great sense of responsibility because on me depended the quantity of grain which would be harvested. I had to justify the hopes placed in me; I had to be the master of the machine." Borin scrupulously learned everything he could about the machine and decided to introduce new methods of work. He improved the grain-cleaning system, and as a result losses decreased while the quality of grain was improved. He refuelled the harvester and filled it with water while in operation; he began to unload the threshed grain without stopping the machine, and he was the first to start working at night. Moreover, he made the tractor pull a second harvester.

Soon Borin's labour productivity began to rise. In 1935, driving the *Kommunar* harvester, he harvested crops from 780 hectares (the norm was 160 hectares) and threshed 808

tons of grain. In 1936, driving the C-1 harvester, Borin harvested grain from 2,040 hectares, i.e., 11.3 times the norm. It would have taken 208 rail vans or 1,030 lorries to carry the grain he threshed. In 1937 Borin's two harvesters trailing behind a single tractor gathered crops from 3,250 hectares and threshed 5,600 tons of grain.

Wonderful results were achieved by P. N. Angelina, a tractor driver in the Beshev MTS (the Ukraine). The farmhand's daughter organised the country's first tractor team of eight women.

In the spring of 1933 the team took to the fields. They left the farm in high spirits, but all of a sudden a crowd of women blocked their way. "Turn back!" they shouted. "We don't want women to run the machines on our fields!" The crowd was reinforced by men who also shouted: "Get out of here! We don't want you on our fields!" Only when the political department of the MTS intervened, was the team allowed to start work. Their results were so good that a few days later the peasants asked the women drivers to forgive them: "Please, forget all about it. We were wrong and did not understand, we have realised our mistake," they said. At the end of the year the girls exceeded the plan by 50 per cent and won the first place in the MTS. Angelina's team widely popularised its methods of work and trained women to become tractor drivers. In 1936 the "tractor institute"—the name given to the team—was attended by more than 100 young women. P. N. Angelina initiated socialist emulation for women tractor teams in the country. More than 20,000 women were involved. Most of them surpassed output standards.

The movement of innovators involved not only machine-operators, but teams and groups of crop cultivators. One of the leaders of the movement was M. S. Demchenko, a group leader in the Komintern Collective Farm, Kiev Region.

M. S. Demchenko started work in 1930 in a Ukrainian collective farm. Demchenko, an active member of the Kom-somol, was appointed leader of a group in one of the teams of crop cultivators. In 1934 she organised a group of eight young women for growing sugar beet. The group was allocated four hectares of land. At that time all work, except ploughing, was done by hand. It was really hard work, but

the girls decided to raise a good harvest. In winter they began to collect ash and prepare superphosphate. They read special literature and attended agricultural courses. In spring they applied the ash and other fertilisers to the soil. Quack grass had to be weeded out by hand because the cultivator and the harrow were of little use in this case. When it became hot, the girls brought water in pails from the river. In 1934 the group harvested 46.9 tons of sugar beet per hectare, and in 1935—52.4 tons. That was the result of good organisation of labour and the right agricultural techniques. The yields proved four times higher than in the other collective farms.

M. Y. Yefremov, a farmer from the Iskra Collective Farm in the Altai Territory, initiated the movement for high grain harvests. During the period of mass collectivisation he organised a collective farm in his village. At the end of 1935 he started experiments on a field of 12 hectares.

Yefremov introduced dense sowing (600 seeds of grain—twice the usual amount—per square metre) and mellowed the shoots with a wooden harrow. The harvest exceeded all expectations—6.1 tons of wheat per hectare from a field of four hectares, and 5.2–5.4 tons per hectare from the remaining 8 hectares. That was a record harvest in the Altai steppe. Next year farmers in many other collective farms in the Altai Territory copied Yefremov's methods. Some of them raised 7 and even 8 tons of wheat per hectare. This opened the way for the speedy development of grain production.

A series of conferences (women cultivators of sugar beet, harvester drivers, cotton-growers from Central Asia and Kazakhstan, cattle-breeders) took place in Moscow at the end of 1935, in 1936 and 1937. Hundreds and thousands of farmers adopted their recommendations. M. S. Demchenko's initiative triggered off the movement by women who decided to raise the yields of sugar beet to at least 50 tons per hectare. At the end of the Second Five-Year Plan many of them raised 70 and even 100 tons per hectare. Harvester drivers decided to collect harvests from at least 1,000 hectares in one season; tractor drivers competed to sow at least 100 hectares a day.

When P. N. Angelina came out with the slogan "100,000 women tractor drivers" in 1938 she succeeded in winning

a great many followers. Tens of thousands of women learned to drive tractors while combining work with study. In 1930 P. N. Angelina was one of the first women to become a tractor driver. Nine years later there were 200,000 women tractor drivers. This was a very important factor during World War II when women efficiently took over the jobs of men who had been called up into the army.

Great interest in developing the collective farm economy was displayed by elderly people. They insisted on opening hut-laboratories for testing various methods of agricultural techniques. By the beginning of 1935 hut-laboratories had opened all over the Ukraine, the Central black-earth region, North Caucasus, Siberia, the Western region, and the Far East territory. In the Ukraine there were nearly 5,500 laboratories, and in the RSFSR more than 4,000.

The country paid high tribute to the innovators. Many farmers were awarded orders and medals; they were elected deputies to the local Soviets or the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and the Union republics. The movement of innovators helped to raise general labour productivity in collective farms. In the period from 1933 to 1937 the performance of 15-horse-power tractors in the MTS was raised from 363 to 470 hectares each. In the second half of the five-year plan the performance of harvesters was raised from 256 to 317 hectares.

Non-collectivised peasants took more than three days to produce 100 kilograms of grain, while collective farms needed two days in 1933 and only one day in 1937. In other words, labour productivity in grain production on collective farms was three times higher than that of individual peasants, and twice what it had been in collective farms in 1933.

DEVELOPMENT OF COLLECTIVE FARM PRODUCTION

In the second half of the 1930s agricultural production made rapid strides thanks to new machinery and the selfless labour of collective farmers. During mass collectivisation

and in the first few years after it had been completed the gross output of crop cultivation and animal husbandry was falling; the yields of grain became smaller and the number of livestock fell drastically. In 1934 the number of livestock began to increase, and in 1937 there were approximately 50 per cent more animals than in 1932/33. In 1935 the yields and gross production of grain began to rise. The average annual yields rose as follows: 1932-34—0.67 tons per hectare; 1935—0.73 tons; 1937—0.93 tons. In the first half of the 1930s the gross harvest of grain did not exceed 70 million tons a year; in 1935 the harvest amounted to 75.02 million tons, and in 1937 to 97.4 million tons.

Great successes were scored in the production of industrial crops. In the period from 1933 to 1937 the average annual harvest of sugar beet exceeded the level of 1928-32 by nearly 50 per cent, and that of cotton was by 80 per cent up. The yields of these crops went up by 30 per cent.

Socialist reorganisation of agriculture sharply increased the amount of state purchases of grain. In 1921-28 the state purchased an average of 11 million tons a year, while in the period 1933-37—the figure was 27.5 million tons (an increase of nearly 150 per cent). The rationing of bread and other foodstuffs, which had been introduced at the end of the 1920s, was abolished in 1935.

The Communist Party and the Soviet state adopted a policy of accelerating the development of the former colonial outlying territories of Russia and raising their economic and cultural standards to the general level in the country as a whole. The Soviet state allocated huge sums for irrigation work in the Central Asian republics (more than 500 million rubles during the Second Five-Year Plan), for supplying the collective and state farms with modern machinery, and for the needs of housing, communal and cultural construction in districts where nomads had gone over to settled farming. Nomad settlers were exempted for two years from all taxes and deliveries.

As the collective farms grew stronger both from an economic and organisational point of view the earnings of collective farmers were rising. In 1932 farmers were paid 2 kg of grain per work-day on the average; in 1935—2.5 kg, and in 1937—3.9 kg.

In 1932 each collective farm family received 585 kg of grain; in 1937 this figure had risen to 1,636 kg (1.6 and 5 kg per day, respectively). If we take into account that an average family consisted of four or five people, and that part of the grain went for fodder, then it becomes clear that in 1932 the amount of grain earned in the collective farms was insufficient to satisfy the needs of the peasant household. In 1937, when the amount of earnings in grain had been more than trebled, the collective farmers began to sell part of their grain (from 6 to 11 per cent) in the market.

In 1932 and during the first years of the Second Five-Year Plan grain was almost the only product that went to pay work-days in collective farms. In the second half of the 1930s collective farms began to distribute dairy products, vegetables, fodder and sometimes even money to remunerate work-days. In 1937, for instance, each homestead received an average of 376 rubles in cash compared with only 108 rubles in 1932.

Another important source of income was the family farmstead. This was because the economic position of artels was not strong enough to satisfy the material requirements of collective farmers. State enterprises—state farms—helped collective farmers to develop their own farmsteads. During the Second Five-Year Plan they sold 0.5 million cows and heifers, 1.5 million pigs, and 1.2 million sheep and lambs to collective farmers. Collective farm dairies also sold livestock to the farmers (1.7 million head of young cattle, 4.5 million lambs, and 16.1 million sucking-pigs in 1933-37). The prices for cattle in state farms and collective farm dairies were much lower than in the market. In 1935 after the approval of the new Rules, which increased the quotas of individual cattle-breeding, the number of cattle owned by collective farmers began to rise.

During the Second Five-Year Plan the number of cattle owned by collective farmers went up by 150 per cent; the number of sheep and goats by 140 per cent; and that of pigs by 330 per cent. In 1932 many collective farmers had no cows nor even any small livestock. By 1938 the majority of peasant households kept cattle, many of them having two or more cows. The 1935 Rules allowed farmers to have 0.25 to 0.5 hectares of land attached to their farmsteads; the

total area of these plots increased from 2.5 million hectares in 1932 to 5.3 million in 1938. Most of the private lots were used for orchards and kitchen-gardens.

Thanks to the victory of the collective farm system the peasants began to eat much better than before the revolution. This can be seen from the following table:

Product	Per capita consumption by poor and middle peasants in 1913 (kg)	Per capita Consumption by collective farmers in 1938	
		kg	% of the 1913 figure
Bread and related products	216.8	271.1	125
Potatoes	97.1	174.8	180
Milk and dairy products	35.6	126.8	148
Meat and lard	11.7	20.9	179
Eggs (in numbers)	16.8	59.3	400

Before the revolution poor peasants in Russia seldom had enough grain to last until the new harvest; in early spring they usually went on starvation rations.

After the socialist reorganisation of agriculture the per capita consumption of grain by peasants went up by 25 per cent, and that of potatoes by 80 per cent. There was a marked increase in the consumption of milk, butter (nearly 50 per cent more than in 1913), meat and lard (nearly 100 per cent more than in 1913), and eggs (300 per cent more). Collective farmers were supplied with food all the year round; the famines, which often hit pre-revolutionary Russia, never recurred.

In the middle of the Second Five-Year Plan the living standards of collective farmers improved drastically; the villagers increased their demand for town clothes and manufactured goods. A study of the budgets of collective farms made in 1934 revealed that an average family spent about 30 per cent of their incomes on manufactured goods. Nearly all families subscribed to newspapers and bought books.

At the end of the 1930s farmers began to buy more manufactured goods. In the period from 1934 to 1937 the share of their expenditure on manufactured goods increased

from 33.4 to 38.4 per cent, while the share of expenditure on cattle and poultry dropped from 17 to 10 per cent. In 1937 collective farmers spent 4.1 per cent of their incomes on items for cultural and domestic use. Nearly 80 per cent of their incomes went on consumer goods.

In the period from 1932 to 1938 sales of fabrics to the rural population went up by 110 per cent, sales of footwear by 60 per cent, toilet goods by 170 per cent, books, sports goods, musical instruments, photographic goods and radio items by 500 per cent, and cutlery and other household goods by 300 per cent. In 1938 farmers bought 279,000 gramophones, 266,000 bicycles, 2,500 motorcycles, 37,000 radio receivers, 163,000 sewing machines and 405,000 watches in village shops.

These changes in spending habits reflected not only the higher living standards, but were a measure of the changes in psychology brought about by the cultural revolution in the countryside. They were also a direct result of the country's industrialisation. Soviet industry began mass production of consumer goods which the old countryside had never seen before.

The appearance of the old settlements began to change. New houses (2.7 million in the 1930s), schools, hospitals, clubs, shops, bath-houses and canteens were built. In Turkmenia, for instance, 20 maternity homes were built in the countryside in 1936 and 11 were about to be completed; 89 new schools were commissioned and 17 buildings were refitted for schools; 28 clubs and 7 libraries were opened; 7 kindergartens were built and 25 buildings were converted into kindergartens.

Electrification in villages was started. By the beginning of the 1940s 10,000 (4 per cent) collective farms, 2,500 (36 per cent) MTS and 1,200 (28 per cent) state farms were supplied with electric power.

The fragmentation of peasant families was intensified in the years of collectivisation. The collective farms guaranteed an independent economic position for each member of a peasant family; they helped young families to solve their housing problems and set up a household of their own. By the beginning of the 1940s the average size of families had dropped to 4.3 people.

Surveys carried out at the end of the 1930s revealed that the peasants' way of life had changed. In the period from 1936 to 1938 a group of researchers surveyed the social, economic, cultural and living conditions of peasants in Zaporozhye Region. They found that the collective farm system had changed the face of the countryside and the habits and tastes of farmers. Farmers were living in large, clean, bright houses; they were well provided for. In 1937 they spent nearly 80 per cent of their incomes on clothes, footwear, furniture, foodstuffs, books and durables. The way in which farmers spent their money approached that of workers. Most collective farm settlements had seven-year schools, clubs, outpatient clinics, maternity homes, nurseries, bath-houses, and shops. All collective farms had radio rediffusion services.

In former nomad regions settlements with schools, clubs, shops, hospitals and medical stations replaced camps and tents. Large-scale cultural and educational work was conducted among the broad masses in the former colonial outskirts.

The peoples of Central Asia overcame in a historically short period of time their age-long backwardness and ignorance: socialism brought them the achievements of world and home culture. Women were once and for all emancipated from the vestiges of feudalism, tribalism and religious trance; they became active builders of socialism.

Collectivisation was a key factor in the elimination of the economic and cultural backwardness of the peoples in the northern areas. The socialist reorganisation of agriculture there was completed in the 1930s and 1940s.

At the end of 1937 the villagers of Kamchatka wrote: "Every year our fathers dreaded the approach of winter. . . . Blizzards raged for seven long months; people died; the hungry dogs howled. Nobody had ever heard laughter in the cold tents. . . . Nobody had ever heard of radio, cinema, books or schools. The Soviet government opened 118 schools for us. We all have warm dwellings, there is plenty of sunlight and joy. . . . We eat vegetables, bread and sugar, and drink milk and tea. . . . But most important is that we enjoy equal rights with all the other citizens of the Soviet Union."

One of the greatest achievements of socialism was the levelling out of the social, economic and cultural development of the peoples of the USSR. The successful socialist reorganisation of agriculture during the creation of a new material and technical basis, the common pattern of collective production all over the country, and the expansion of the cultural revolution gradually eliminated the differences in the position and make-up of countryfolk in various regions.

THE PEASANTRY: A CLASS OF THE SOCIALIST SOCIETY

The formation of the Soviet peasantry as a class of the socialist society was a lengthy and complicated process which was inherently linked with socialist reorganisation of agriculture and society as a whole.

From a backward and an agrarian country the Soviet Union was being quickly transformed into an industrial and collective farm state. Hundreds of factories were being constructed, mines and pits sunk; new branches of industry appeared. The map of the country bore the names of new towns and workers' settlements. The countryside became a major source of manpower for industry. In the period from 1926 to 1939 some 18.5 million people moved to towns. By 1939 the urban population of the USSR had increased by nearly 30 million (from 26.3 to 56.1 million), while the rural population decreased by 6.3 million. It was only thanks to the tremendous natural growth of the rural population (18 million) that the scale of the redistribution of the population between town and countryside was somewhat reduced. The scale, however, was still quite great: in 1939, 33 per cent of the entire population lived in towns.

One of the major factors which prompted farmers to move to towns was the growth of labour productivity. In 1926 one peasant occupied in agriculture fed, besides himself, only one man; in 1939 he fed nearly four people. Thus the surplus manpower in the countryside was siphoned off to towns.

By the beginning of the 1940s there were 78.2 million peasants in the USSR (within the borders as they existed on September 17, 1939) as compared with 112.1 million in 1926. Of this number 75.1 million (96 per cent) were collective farmers. Nearly half of the peasants (at least 34 million according to the census of 1939) were employed in agriculture. The drastic reduction in employment compared with 1926 is explained by the fact that juveniles and disabled people were released from farm work.

The habitation pattern was also gradually changing. As a result of the enlargement of villages and the liquidation of the majority of isolated farmsteads the number of rural settlements was reduced from 613,600 in 1926 to 573,000 in 1939. Many old villages were re-planned, new settlements appeared in Central Asia, Kazakhstan and Siberia where the semi-nomadic population was settling down.

The triumph of the collective farm system radically changed the social and economic character of the peasantry. It was transformed from a class of small proprietors, socially heterogeneous and dispersed due to the conditions of production, into collectivised peasantry—the class inherently bound to socialist ownership and the socialist system of economy. The stratification of the peasantry ended with the completion of collectivisation and such social concepts as poor and middle peasants and the kulaks disappeared once and for all.

According to data for 1939, collective farms incorporated 96.9 per cent of peasant households (18.6 million out of 19.3 million). Collective farmers and handicraftsmen in co-operative societies accounted for 47.2 per cent of the country's population; non-collectivised peasants and independent handicraftsmen accounted for only 2.6 per cent of the population. The farms of non-collectivised peasants (approximately 700,000) played an insignificant role in the country's economy. Quite often they were simply households of single or old people. The situation changed slightly in 1940 when the USSR incorporated the western regions of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Moldavia, and also Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with an aggregate of 3.1 million individual households.

Collective farmers became the dominant force in the countryside and in agriculture as a whole. According to the census of 1939, they accounted for 66.9 per cent of the rural population; workers and office employees accounted for 27.1 per cent; non-collectivised peasants and independent handicraftsmen for 3.6 per cent, and handicraftsmen in co-operative societies for 2.4 per cent. Collective farms were contributing more than 90 per cent of the gross agricultural output.

Collective farmers constitute a socially homogeneous class of the same type as the working class as both classes are based on socialist ownership and the socialist way of production. But in terms of the character of labour the class of collective farmers is heterogeneous. The majority of this class (approximately 90 per cent of people employed in agricultural production, according to the census of 1939) was connected with unskilled manual and horse-assisted labour. The second group, which was continually growing in numbers, was represented by the maintenance personnel, trailer operators and drivers of tractors, harvesters and lorries. In 1933 there were only 600,000 of them; by 1937 the number had increased to 1.8 million, and in 1940 it was 2.5 million, or 7.3 per cent of workers occupied in collective farm production. Although the machine operators worked in the MTS, they remained collective farmers (harvester drivers were only taken onto the staffs of the MTS in the spring of 1935). The professional skill and the character of work of collective farm machine operators was allied to that of industrial workers.

Collective farmers working with their brains rather than their hands can be placed in the third group. This group comprises the collective farm intellectuals—chairmen of collective farms and their deputies, specialists and production managers. In 1939 the group numbered at least one million—nearly 3 per cent of people occupied in collective farming.

An important aspect of the development of collective farms was the division and specialisation of labour. The individual farmer was a general producer, a Jack-of-all-trades. According to the census of 1926, 68.9 million (96.6 per cent) of the 71.3 million people employed in agriculture had no

definite trade or profession. One of the natural consequences of the development of large-scale public production and the growth of its technical facilities is the evolution of different professional groups among the collective farmers.

Professional division of labour was also increasing among the most numerous group of collective farmers whose labour was not as yet mechanised. The census of 1939, for instance, registered workers of such professions as team leaders, group leaders, agronomists, cattle-yard workers, women calf-tenders, milk-maids, stable-men, pig-tenders, poultry-breeders, shepherds, herdsmen, gardeners, vine-growers, vegetable-growers, melon-growers and irrigators.

The intellectual make-up of the peasantry was deeply affected by labour in public enterprises, sharp improvement of living standards and living conditions, and the cultural revolution in the countryside.

The collective farmer at the end of the 1930s was a different man to the individual peasant before collectivisation; his mental horizon was broader, he was more literate.

By 1933 illiteracy in most territories and regions of the USSR and in some national republics had been almost completely eradicated. During the Second Five-Year Plan the peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East began to learn the alphabet. Education was spreading in the villages of Central Asia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. Much was done to raise the general education of peasants who had learned to read and write. The collective farmers of one village in Chuvash ASSR said: "You have taught us the alphabet, now help us to get on, teach us agronomics, the natural sciences and mathematics."

According to the census of 1939, there was practically no illiteracy in the country. The number of literates among the rural population reached 84 per cent (91.6 per cent among men, and 76.8 per cent among women).

The task of implementing general and compulsory primary education had been accomplished by 1933; the problem of seven-year education was nearing solution. The Party's 18th Congress advanced the task of general secondary education in towns and the complete introduction of universal seven-year education in the countryside in all national republics.

Libraries and clubs played an outstanding part in raising the educational and cultural level of peasants. The Soviet state allocated extensive funds for expanding their network. In 1928 there were 18,900 libraries in the countryside; in 1939 there were 61,700. The number of village clubs increased from 28,600 in 1928 to 95,500 in 1939.

Newspapers and books brought knowledge and culture to the countryside. Surveys carried out in the middle of the 1930s revealed that newspapers were read by nearly all farming families; many families had their own small libraries. According to a poll conducted in 1938, among 6,000 young farmers aged between 16 and 25, more than half of them borrowed books from libraries and read sociopolitical literature; nearly two-thirds read fiction.

Libraries and clubs became centres of mass political and cultural work in the countryside. People went there to read books and newspapers, to hear lectures or see films. The drama, chorus and musical circles introduced farmers to the world of art; they gave help to talented people.

Gradually farmers discarded religious convictions. During the years of mass collectivisation many villages and settlements refused to attend religious ceremonies; they organised "atheist collective farms". Nearly a third of the rural population had broken all ties with religion by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan. That was a remarkable achievement even though many elderly peasants hesitated to follow suit. In the early 1940s many collective farmers stopped going to churches or attending religious ceremonies. Prejudices and superstitions were dying. New, socialist rituals—celebrations of revolutionary holidays, celebrations in honour of the victors of socialist emulation, weddings of young people—began to take shape. The psychology of the small proprietor was being reshaped; the psychology of the class of collective proprietors was being developed on the basis of public labour of equal members of artels, development of socialist democracy, and the rising skills and cultural level of collective farmers. The servile bond to the plot of land, and money-grabbing were vanishing. The collective farmer is one of the managers of the artel, he is a member of a collective of toilers, a collective of colleagues. The features of the new psychology of Soviet peasants are a socialist attitude

towards labour and comprehension of public and state interests.

The Soviet peasant of that period was a man who actively participated in administering the affairs of state. Representatives of the peasantry accounted for 40 per cent (800 people) of the delegates to the extraordinary Eighth All-Union Congress of Soviets; 432 (30 per cent) of the 1,143 deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which was elected in December 1937, were peasants.

Among the most important features of the collective farm peasantry are its Soviet patriotism, loyalty to the ideals of socialism, and readiness to defend the collective farm system from any enemy. The delegates to the First All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers declared: "Today we can boldly say on behalf of all peasants: we are justified in placing our trust in the Soviet government and the Communist Party. It is our government. It is our Party. We are prepared to defend everything we have against anyone at any time until final victory."

ON THE THRESHOLD OF WAR

The collective farm system, which took shape and advanced during the first and second five-year plans, was a decisive condition for the swift development of agricultural production, and for raising the living standards and the cultural level of the peasantry. At the end of the 1930s the Communist Party set new targets for the development of collective farms and the entire socialist agriculture.

The Party's 18th Congress, which was held in March 1939, noted that the USSR had entered the stage when the formation of the socialist society was to be completed and when steps were to be taken for the gradual transition from socialism to communism. The congress endorsed the Third Five-Year Economic Development Plan of the USSR for 1938-1942, which envisaged a 52 per cent increase in agricultural production. It was planned to boost the production of grain, industrial crops, vegetables and livestock products.

The tasks were to introduce all-round mechanisation, complete land management on collective farms, and improve agronomical techniques. The Third Five-Year Plan was to be a big new step towards higher living standards for collective farmers.

Land was the principle means of production. The state acts certified that 370 million hectares of land had been given over to collective farms for lasting and rent-free use. The state continually supervised the correct utilisation of land by the collective farms.

Methods of state purchases of collective farm products are of great significance for the development of collective farm production. They were changing as time went by. During the First Five-Year Plan collective farms and state purchasing agencies signed contracts for the delivery of farm produce. The parties assumed definite obligations. The collective farm promised to sell a definite amount of products, while the state organisation undertook to pay for the products and to help the collective farm with machinery and implements, seed, fertilisers, etc. In 1933 this system was replaced by a system of compulsory deliveries. The state fixed concrete amounts of farm products which the collective farms had to deliver in the first instance.

In the period from 1933 to 1939 the amount of compulsory delivery of grain and other crops was calculated on the basis of sown area, i.e., the collective farm had to deliver a fixed amount of products from each hectare of land under crops. The deliveries of livestock products were calculated on the basis of the number of head of cattle. This system was inadequate for encouraging the development of collective farm production. Collective farms frequently tried to restrict their plans for sowing; they were not interested in increasing the herds of cattle. At the beginning of 1940 the Party and the government revised the principle for calculating the delivery norms. The deliveries of grain, potatoes and vegetables were fixed in relation to the area of ploughland allocated to the collective farm by the state act, and not in relation to the sown area. The delivery of animal products was fixed in relation to the general area of land used by the collective farm, and not to the available number of cattle. Minimum numbers of cattle in collective farm dairies were

fixed according to geographical zones and the area of land in the collective farm. This principle encouraged the growth of collective farm production.

Purchasing prices were decisive in the settlement of accounts between the state and collective farms. They had to be high enough for accumulating funds as well as for compensating the expenses involved in production. In practice, however, purchasing prices were much lower than production costs.

In the middle of the second five-year plan period the state began to gradually raise purchasing prices. The first rise followed the abolition of rationing and the establishment of state retail prices. In the late 1930s and early 1940s prices which entailed no losses were fixed for cotton and wool. Alongside compulsory deliveries, the state began to purchase surplus grain and other products, for which it paid, on the eve of the war, two or three times more than for compulsory deliveries. The products were sold by strong collective farms which succeeded in retaining surplus after compulsory deliveries.

The intention of the Party and the government to raise the purchasing prices for collective farm products and delivery prices for state farm products was frustrated by the war.

The threat of armed aggression was increasing. In the autumn of 1939 Germany attacked Poland and triggered off World War II. The Soviet Union was compelled to switch a major portion of its industry over to military production. Deliveries of tractors, harvesters and trailer implements to agriculture were reduced. In 1940 the output of tractors dropped to 31,600 (against 51,000 in 1937), and the output of basic farm implements was reduced by 50 to 60 per cent (the production of grain harvesters fell from 43,900 to 12,800). But even then the technical base of collective farms continued to expand. The number of MTS increased from 5,818 in 1937 to 7,069 in 1940. The percentage of collective farms served by the MTS increased from 78.3 to 85. The level of mechanisation also rose. In 1940 collective farms used mechanical power to do 83 per cent of ploughing of fallow land, 71 per cent of winter ploughing, 81 per cent of cotton-sowing, and 93 per cent of sugar beet sowing. Harvesters collected 43 per cent of grain.

However, many branches of agricultural production (cattle-breeding, vegetable-growing) were only mechanised to a small degree. Manual labour and horses were still more or less widely employed.

Collective farmers put all their efforts into the nation-wide struggle for completing the construction of socialist society. The movement of innovators developed further. It was headed by maintenance workers and tractor, harvester and lorry drivers.

The collective farmers in Central Asia completed the Big Ferghana Canal. It was an outstanding feat. The 270-kilometre canal improved irrigation for 500,000 hectares of ploughland and helped to develop nearly 70,000 hectares of virgin lands. If old methods had been used, it would have taken many years to build such a canal. The Uzbek collective farmers who initiated the project proposed a new method—the project was declared a national construction site. Some 160,000 collective farmers from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirghizia completed it in less than seven weeks (the work was started on August 1 and completed on September 15, 1939). There were more volunteers than required. The high work quotas were generally surpassed. Thousands of builders were awarded various orders of the USSR.

The same method was employed in 1940 in building irrigation canals in Turkmenia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

Late in the 1930s and early 1940s collective farmers joined in the socialist emulation for the right to take part in the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition. The emulation involved more than half (130,000) of the collective farms, nearly two-thirds (4,161) of the MTS, and almost a quarter (120,000) of livestock farms.

The exhibition was opened on August 1, 1939 in Moscow. It served as centre for spreading advanced methods. Thousands of delegations from collective farms, MTS and state farms visited the exhibition.

The selfless labour of collective farmers brought good results. During the Third Five-Year Plan agricultural production surpassed the results achieved during the first two five-year plans. The growth of grain production is illustrated by the following table:

	Gross harvest (mln tons)	Yields (tons per hectare)	State purchases (mln tons)
1909-1913 (average p. a.)	65.2	0.69	—
1928-1932 (average p. a.)	73.6	0.75	18.2
1933-1937 (average p. a.)	72.9	0.71	27.5
1938-1940 (average p. a.)	77.9	0.77	32.1

The average annual grain harvest during the Second Five-Year Plan was 10 per cent higher than in the period from 1909 to 1913, and during the Third Five-Year Plan it was 20 per cent higher. The yields were 3 and 12 per cent higher, respectively. In the pre-war years the country was purchasing 80 per cent more grain per annum than during the First Five-Year Plan.

In 1940 socialist agriculture's gross output was 40 per cent higher than in 1913; the output of cropping was 50 per cent higher. The gross harvest of grain reached 95.6 million tons (at an average yield of 0.86 tons per hectare); that was 25 per cent more than during the bumper harvest year of 1913. The state stocked 36.4 million tons of grain. The country fully satisfied domestic needs and even succeeded in stocking up reserves. That proved to be of exceptional importance during the war.

Livestock breeding was making slower progress. By the turn of the 1940s the head of cattle had not reached the 1928 level. In 1940 the country put out 14 per cent more livestock products than in 1913, but less than in 1928.

BEGINNING OF AGRARIAN REFORMS IN THE BALTIC REPUBLICS, AND THE WESTERN AREAS OF THE UKRAINE, BYELORUSSIA AND MOLDAVIA

In the autumn of 1939 the friendly family of Soviet peoples was joined by the peoples of the western areas of the Ukraine and Byelorussia, and in the summer of 1940, by the peoples of western Moldavia and the Baltic states. Prior

to the reunification with the Soviet Union the position of peasants in those areas had been extremely difficult. The landlords, clergy and kulaks concentrated in their hands most of the land, livestock and farm implements. They ruthlessly exploited the masses of toiling peasants and farmhands. In the western regions of Moldavia, for instance, 54 per cent of peasant households had no draught animals, 70 per cent had no cows.

Agrarian reform in these regions was started immediately after the establishment of Soviet power there. It was based on the principles proclaimed in Lenin's Decree on Land and in the other agrarian laws of the first years of the October Revolution, i.e., the nationalisation of land and its transfer for use by the toiling peasants. On July 22, 1940, the Sejm (representative assembly) of the Lithuanian SSR adopted a Declaration which stated: "Expressing the will of all the working people and being guided by the interests of the toiling peasants, the People's Sejm declares that all the land and the natural resources which lie below it, all the forests and waters of Lithuania belong to the people, that is, it declares them to be state property. Henceforth land will belong only to those who cultivate it."

Just as in post-revolutionary Russia, the estates of landlords and big capitalists were confiscated, the holdings of kulaks were drastically reduced. Most of the confiscated land, livestock, draught animals and farm implements were handed over to landless peasants and farmhands. Model estates were converted into state farms. In the Lithuanian SSR, for instance, 883 landlords and big bourgeois landowners, 28 monasteries and 690 churches were dispossessed of 607,000 hectares of land which was transferred into the state land fund for redistribution. Two-thirds of the confiscated land went to peasants and farmhands, and 7 per cent to state farms.

In the western regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia the Soviet government handed over more than 2 million hectares of land and 150,000 head of livestock to the toiling peasants and farmhands; in the Baltic republics more than 200,000 farmhands, landless or land-poor peasants received land; in the liberated area of Moldavia 185,000 households (nearly 40 per cent) received 230,000 hectares of land and tens of thousands of head of cattle.

Just as during the agrarian reforms of 1917-18, the most important results of the 1940 agrarian reforms in the new areas were the growth of the middle peasantry and the formation of the most flexible and appropriate land-tenure system for the transition to socialism. In the Baltic republics the conversion of the peasantry into middle peasantry was slower due to the restricted redistribution of land. The big households were only deprived of land in excess of 30 hectares, and the new households were given anything between 5 and 10 hectares of land. As a result of the agrarian reform in Lithuania, for instance, one-quarter of all peasant households received 5 to 10 hectares of land, approximately the same number owned 10 to 20 hectares, and a third had 20 to 30 hectares. The difference was great but at the same time the number of households with 1 to 5 hectares was sharply reduced; there were no households with more than 30 hectares.

Economically, the egalitarian redistribution of land in the Baltic republics, which had a developed system of isolated farmsteads, was inexpedient and even harmful. It would have required additional allocations for land management; the petty-bourgeois illusions of the peasantry might have become stronger as a result.

The Soviet government extended long-term credits to the peasants, sold them seed and building materials at discount prices, and opened draught-animal and farm-implementation hire stations. Of great significance was the organisation of machine-and-tractor stations which were essential for the co-operation of the peasantry in production. By the spring of 1941 the western area of Moldavia had 52 MTS, the western areas of the Ukraine and Byelorussia nearly 300 MTS, and the Baltic republics 117 MTS. It is worth noting that the MTS were organised during the agrarian reforms and long before mass collectivisation; all the expenses were borne by the state.

It was difficult and not always expedient to use tractors on individual farms. In this connection the republics in the Baltic area resorted to machine-and-horse hire stations.

The agrarian reforms prepared the ground for collectivisation. By the spring of 1941 there were 3,704 collective farms in the western regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia, and

120 in the western area of Moldavia. In western Ukraine 13 per cent of peasant households had joined the collective farms.

The agrarian reforms of 1940-41 were socialist in outlook; they created the primary prerequisites for the gradual transition of the peasantry to socialism. This transition took place in much more favourable conditions than a few years earlier in other parts of the country. There was every opportunity for a rapid technical re-equipment of agriculture, for assisting the reunited regions and republics with personnel and credits, and for sharing with them the rich experience accumulated in the course of socialist reorganisation.

Nazi Germany's aggression interrupted the progress of Soviet agriculture.

THE PEASANTRY IN THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE AGAINST NAZI GERMANY

IN DEFENCE OF THE NATION

Nazi Germany's aggression drastically changed the life of the Soviet people.

The effects of the war were felt deep in the rear as well as in front-line areas.

Countless meetings were held in villages throughout the country. Men went off to the front.

Peasants rose up in defence of their country together with workers and intellectuals. For many years the Party had consolidated the friendship of the peoples and the alliance of the peasantry and the working class; it had built up the moral and political unity of the Soviet people. This policy proved to be its vital force.

Long queues of volunteers stood by mobilisation centres. The peasantry sent to the front their most qualified work force—machine operators and drivers. They were mostly young people under 25. Technically capable, they played an important part in supplementing the country's motorised armed forces.

Collective farmers displayed great heroism on the battlefields. During the war nearly seven million Soviet soldiers were awarded orders and medals; many of these distinguished servicemen were peasants. A great many collective farmers won the Gold Medal of the Hero of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet peasants in army uniforms and with weapons in hand greatly contributed to the victory over the enemy.

THE UNVANQUISHED

Before the war 88 million people or 45 per cent of the entire population had lived in regions which temporarily fell prey to the nazis. Approximately two-thirds of the population of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and other areas occupied by the nazis lived in villages. The nazi onslaught was so swift that only part of the peasant population succeeded in being evacuated. Tens of thousands of collective farms with vast sown areas and other material resources fell into the hands of the enemy. Before the war the occupied territories accounted for 47 per cent of the country's sown area and 45 per cent of the cattle population.

Nazi Germany's policy on the occupied territory was to utilise this wealth to the full and to exploit the agricultural resources and the farm population in the interests of the German war machine; in practice this policy was no more than plunder and robbery. The nazis began to work out the directives for managing the economy on the occupied territory long before the war. Stress was laid on Germany's particular interest in farm produce. With the possible exception of oil, food was the thing that Germany needed most. The acquisition of food was declared the principal economic reason for the aggression against the Soviet Union.¹

Since the nazis intended to settle down on Soviet territory, they worked out a system of robbing it in a calculated manner. They regarded the occupied Soviet territory as an agrarian and raw material base for the German Reich. Industry was to be destroyed, while agriculture was to be developed on an extremely primitive basis without substantial expense. The conversion of this area into the principal source of food for Germany doomed Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and other Soviet peoples to servile labour, semi-starvation and absolute obedience.

The peasants could not dispose of produce at their own will. The nazis squeezed out everything they could from

¹ The directives said: "The areas subject to occupation must be utilised primarily in the field of food and oil economy. The principal economic aim of the campaign is to provide Germany with as much food and oil as possible." *The Nuremberg Tribunal*, Moscow, 1954, Vol. 1, p. 716. (in Russian).

"public farms", land associations and private peasants. That was the essence of Germany's policy on the occupied territory and of the so-called land reform.

Unrestrained robbery and coercion were the basis of the whole system of the occupation regime. There were no fixed norms of grain delivery and there was no reasonable system of procurements. The following dialogue between Goering and Gauleiter Rikke during a conference of Reichskommissars in August 1942 is indicative of the methods of determining the volume of procurements:

Goering. Now let us see what Russia has to offer. I think, Rikke, that we can get from the whole Russian territory two million tons of bread and fodder grain.

Rikke. We'll get it.

Goering. In the case we must get three million, excluding the needs of the army.

Rikke. No, everything in the front-line area goes to the army.

Goering. Well, then let it be two million.

Rikke. No.

Goering. One and a half million.

Rikke. All right.

Those were the "scientific" methods of determining the volume of procurements. The only principle applied was to grab as much as possible at any cost. In the few instances when the norms of procurements were fixed, they did not preclude new and higher assignments being made. All other products were wholly or nearly wholly expropriated.

The fixed quota of grain procurements—two-thirds of whatever was left over after the reserve of seed for sowing had been set aside—introduced in June 1943 was of no practical significance. Fixed quotas were so high for "land associations" that not infrequently the entire gross output was expropriated.

In addition to expropriating the whole commercial and even gross output, the Germans imposed various additional taxes on the peasants.

Various methods were devised to extort the taxes. Hitler's decree of July 29, 1941, gave Goering, as "the executive of the four-year plan", the right to "utilise to the full the un-

covered reserves and economic capacities" with resort to "any measure" in favour of the German war economy. Hitler's circular of August 29, 1942, reaffirmed the need to employ the armed forces "for providing food supplies to the German people". In conformity with the instructions he had received, Goering told a conference of the gauleiters in the occupied territory: "You have been sent there to squeeze out everything so that the German people might live.... Nobody cares whether you say that your people (the population in the occupied territory—*Ed.*) are dying from starvation."

Groups of three to five soldiers went from house to house and "procured" all that they could find, even the last chicken or egg. Those who resisted were either thrown into prison or shot.

Clothes were also confiscated. The order of November 6, 1941, given to Army Group North said: "All felt boots, including children's boots, must be requisitioned from the Russian population. Possession of felt boots is prohibited and should be punished in the same way as for the illegal possession of weapons (shooting on the spot)."

But worse still was the way in which people were driven off to slavery in Germany. Each village was given a fixed quota for the "delivery" of able-bodied people. The department for the utilisation of labour officially reported that in 1942 nearly two million people from the occupied areas in the east were driven off to Germany. At first the Germans tried to select physically strong and hardy people in the 15-45 age group, but at the end of 1942 they announced the so-called total mobilisation which applied even to the sick and disabled.

The whole world knows of the tragedy of Lidice in Czechoslovakia and Oradur-sur-Glan in France. These villages were razed to the ground and their inhabitants shot. In Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia this was the fate of countless villages and settlements.

On March 11 and 12, 1943, the Germans reduced 870 households to ashes, and shot and then burned 4,268 people, including babies, in the village of Kozari in Chernigov Region.

This was the fate of 23 other settlements in Chernigov Region during the two years of nazi occupation.

On April 21, 1943, the Germans burned down the village of Kodra in Makarov district, Kiev Region; 1,113 people perished.

In Chigirin district they razed to the ground the settlement of Buda and shot 82 people, including 55 children.

In Byelorussia the nazi barbarians pillaged and then burned down the village of Selets; they shot or burned alive 204 peaceful inhabitants. This is what T. Muzychenko, a collective farmer who was fortunate enough to escape, said about the tragedy: "Early in the morning of November 2, 1943, a German punitive detachment surrounded the village. The Germans burst into the houses and used rifle butts to chase people out into the street. They shot all who were slow in coming out; the villagers were driven into two large houses; the Germans barred the doors and then began to fire with automatic weapons through the windows and to throw hand-grenades. Then they set fire to the houses. Ashes and scorched bodies were all that was left after the fire."

In March 1943 German punitive detachments burned down the village of Khatyn; its 149 inhabitants died in the flames. In Baranovichy Region they burned the villages of Dory, Dubovtsy, Mishany, Davgulevshchina and Lapitsy together with their inhabitants.

In May 1943 the Germans burned to death the inhabitants of the villages of Osinovik, Nebyshino, Novoselki, Pyany Les, Vitunichi, Budilovka and Bersenevka in Minsk Region.

On January 22, 1944, the nazis annihilated the inhabitants of the village of Boiki in Ruzhany district, Brest Region. The houses and farm buildings were burned down. The adults were shot in parties of 10; the children were given over to 15 hungry dogs who tore them to pieces and dragged them over the scorched ruins.

In 1942 the nazis shot all the inhabitants and burned down the village of Barsuki in the Rezekne district of Latvia. The same fate overtook the village of Audrini where 235 people died in the flames.

In Lithuania the nazi monsters wiped out 21 villages and hundreds of isolated farmsteads. People will never forget the tragedy of the village of Pirciupis. The Germans threw

119 people, including babies, into the flames and shot down with automatic weapons all those who tried to escape from the burning houses.

However, the terror and coercion failed to break the morale of the Soviet peasants; it served only to intensify their hatred for the enemy and strengthened their will to fight for liberation. Partisan warfare began to take on enormous proportions.

The peasants, the workers and the intellectuals launched an armed struggle in the enemy's rear. The villages provided the partisans with food. The million-strong army of partisans depended almost entirely on the economic resources of the peasantry.

The resistance of the population frustrated Germany's plan to utilise to the full the food resources in the occupied areas. According to the official information of the German Command, it did not succeed even once in fulfilling the minimum procurement of 5 million tons of grain. In 1942/43 they came near to fulfilling the plan, but in 1941/42 and in 1943/44 they expropriated only half of what they had planned. In spite of the most ruthless measures, the nazis never succeeded in expropriating more than 41 per cent of the gross intake of grain. The peasants risked their lives to conceal grain and food in the ground, and drive off cattle into the forests. They carried out mass sabotage of nazi procurements. In areas of strong partisan warfare the deliveries of grain were exceptionally poor. During a conference which Goering called on August 6, 1942, Reichskommissar Lohse declared that because of the partisans "it is highly improbable that the harvest can be collected on half of Byelorussia's territory where the sowing has been successfully completed".

Nazi plans to supply the army and the population of Germany with food from the occupied areas were a complete fiasco.

Soviet peasants who remained on the occupied territory not only sabotaged German procurements but frequently found means of delivering food across the front line. On some occasions caravans with food were sent across the front line to the Red Army and the people in the unoccupied territories. Cartloads of food arrived from Smolensk Region, Byelorussia and other occupied areas. In the spring of 1942

the partisans in Vitebsk Region delivered 21,000 tons of grain, 10,000 tons of potatoes, 35,000 tons of hay, 2,500 horses and 1,000 head of cattle.

Collective farmers from partisan areas delivered 200 cartloads of food to the besieged city of Leningrad.

Quite often money and valuables were also sent over the front line.

Deep in the enemy's rear, in remote areas, some collective farms continued to work in accordance with Soviet laws. There were lots of them in Byelorussia where the partisans were in control of 60 per cent of the republic's territory. By March 1942 the partisans had liberated the entire western part of Bryansk Region with an area of more than 1,500 square kilometres and a population of over 30,000. They reinstituted 16 village Soviets and 60 collective farms; the latter completed spring sowing on 6,000 hectares of land. In some regions the partisans protected whole districts of collective farms throughout the occupation period.

The peaceful work of grain-growers in these particular collective farms was combined with armed struggle. Work in the fields was often done in front-line conditions because of the fear of intrusion by punitive detachments. The sowing was done at night; the fields were dotted with dug-outs. Partisans frequently joined in the work in the fields. One could often see ploughmen with rifles slung over their shoulder.

The chairmen of such collective farms were responsible both to the members and the partisan command. They acted as emissaries of partisans. Many collective farms worked according to plans worked out in conjunction with partisans, who received a proportion of the farm produce.

Resistance to the enemy also involved the protection of collective farm property. The machines were dismantled and their parts hidden in the ground or in attics. Seed and cattle were distributed among the farmers for concealment.

This struggle was intensified during the nazi retreat when the Germans adopted a "scorched earth" policy and not only destroyed farm machinery, cattle and crops, but burnt villages and drove the population into slavery.

Communists in the underground were almost always in command of the situation. The unchallenged authority of the Communist Party could be felt in everything.

Collective farmers in the occupied territories succeeded in saving a great deal of public property.

Thousands of farmers displayed courage and determination. In his story "The Last Day of Matvei Kuzmin", Boris Polevoi, a prominent Soviet author, writes about an 80-year old farmer. A guide was required by German battalion; the nazis got hold of Matvei Kuzmin, an ardent hunter who knew the local forests and the paths leading through the marshes. They threatened to shoot him if he refused to help them and promised money, flour, kerosene and even an excellent German two-barrel fowling-piece—the dream of every hunter—as a reward if he agreed. Kuzmin led the battalion into an ambush and it was wiped out. However the Germans shot Kuzmin. The partisans buried him on the lofty bank of the Lovat and accorded him full military honours. Three rifle volleys were fired over the grave.

SALVAGING OF COLLECTIVE FARM PROPERTY

Victory was decided not only on the battlefield but in the fields and factories. It was decided by those who operated lathes and harvesters in the rear.

Peasants did great service in helping solve the food problem. Agriculture is justly regarded as a key component of the country's defence and economic potential. The outcome of any war greatly depends on the supply of food, clothes and shoes to the army and to the workers who produce armaments.

While heavy defensive actions were fought from the Barents Sea all the way down to the Black Sea, while trainloads of soldiers sped to the front, agricultural workers in the threatened districts did all they could to save social property from the nazi invaders. The Soviet government called upon the people "to leave no locomotives, no vans, no bread and no fuel for the enemy".

Collective farms, state farms and MTS were evacuated. Farm machines were driven off to the rear. The evacuation was directed by Party regional and district committees.

As the front approached, they drew up plans for evacua-

tion and organised special teams for each state farm, MTS or collective farm. The farms and the MTS organised groups of Communists and activists who were made responsible for the evacuation of property.

The shortest routes to the rear were chosen, following the same latitude.

All healthy animals—bulls, cows, sheep, goats, and horses—had to be evacuated. Pigs (with the exception of pedigree pigs) were slaughtered. The machines were made ready for the evacuation. They were organised into tractor convoys; engines were taken off harvesters for possible evacuation with other valuables. Everything that could not be taken away was dismantled and given to the farmers that stayed behind (mostly to the families of tractor drivers) for safekeeping. Tractor convoys were headed by the executives of MTS and state farms.

Herds of cattle and flocks of sheep with herdsmen and milk-maids on carts took to the roads.

The collective farmers, workers of state farms and specialists also retreated. Some 500,000 people left the Ukraine. In many instances whole collective farms were evacuated.

People walked as long as they could and then rested by the road; they endured everything that human beings can stand.

Here is a story told by an eye-witness:

"Herds, countless herds of cows, sheep and goats flooded our town from the front-line area. . . . Thousands of animals were dropping from fatigue. They were put into carts and driven further. . . . Camps were scattered all over the banks of the quiet river. Shepherds, milk-maids, sick sheep, dressed carcasses, skins. . . . A milk-maid told me that they had been on the road for a month and four days. She was 45; her sharp, dark eyes had seen death, her voice was rough and full of anger. 'We must get all our animals to the destination, without any losses,' she told me. 'But they are not used to walking long distances, their legs are weak, they go along slowly, and you know what happens when they are machine-gunned from the skies? The sheep, naturally, flock together in fright, while those devils pour lead upon them from above. When we left the village the front line was 50 kilometres

away, but when we looked back, the village was already in flames. . . . Then shells began to explode all around us. We jumped into the roadside ditches, the cows rushed for the forest, but the sheep were nearly all butchered.'"

The evacuation from the Ukraine was exceptionally difficult. The evacuation route for collective farms and state farms from Smolensk, Moscow and Kalinin regions was no more than 300 to 400 kilometres, while the Ukrainian peasants had to cover 1,500 and even 2,000 kilometres. Fodder was lacking, the animals exhausted by the long journey contracted foot-and-mouth disease, anthrax and other diseases. Cattle-plague was rampant, but the farmers succeeded in saving most of the cattle. In 1941 the Ukraine evacuated 65.3 per cent of its cattle, 92.2 per cent of sheep, 30.9 per cent of pigs, 14.2 per cent of horses. The horses were handed over to the Red Army. Most of the state farm cattle was saved.

It was much more difficult to save the machines. If a tractor broke down there was practically no way of taking it away since there were no spares and no spare transport facilities. There was a shortage of fuel and so the machines had to be wrecked on the spot. Only 20,300 tractors—less than half of the tractor pool scheduled for evacuation—were evacuated.

In the summer of 1942 more evacuations took place from the southern areas. People who had already made the heroic march from the Ukrainian steppes to the North Caucasus and the Volga were compelled to face thirst and scorching heat on the Astrakhan steppes.

The main torrent headed towards Kazakhstan. In August property and cattle were taken over the Volga under extremely difficult conditions. People perished while trying to save animals from air attacks. It was only thanks to mass heroism that the cattle was taken over to the eastern bank.

In spite of the tremendous difficulties much of the cattle and machines were evacuated in 1942.

More than two-thirds of the cattle were saved; some animals were slaughtered for meat, and others were left for the winter. The evacuation of machines was less successful, only 10 per cent of tractors and 2 per cent of harvesters were saved.

The evacuees replenished the manpower of collective farms and state farms in the eastern areas, particularly in Siberia where there was a shortage of labour. Approximately 60,000 evacuees were working on collective farms in Novosibirsk, Kemerovo and Tomsk regions as of January 1, 1943. That was about 15 per cent of the total number of able-bodied farmers in those regions. 125 evacuees worked as tractor drivers, 179 as mechanics and nearly 2,000 as accountants and book-keepers. According to rough estimates, the evacuees earned more than five million work-day units in the collective farms of West Siberia. Data collected in 32 regions, territories and republics revealed that 4,845 of the total of 5,086 evacuated specialists and leading agricultural workers worked in MTS, collective farms and land agencies.

Leading farmers, particularly from the Ukraine, greatly contributed to the organisation of agricultural production in the rear.

The Ukrainian farmers began to grow sugar beet in the eastern regions. Though no sugar had ever been grown before in these regions and though the climatic conditions were quite different, they succeeded in harvesting 12 and even 17 tons per hectare.

The evacuation not only deprived the nazis of much of material value, but helped the Soviet government solve the food problem. The evacuated cattle went to supply the army. Thus the collective farms in the rear retained their own herds and improved the conditions for the reproduction of animals. The evacuated farmers, workers of state farms and MTS, and agricultural specialists contributed to the organisation of farm production in the rear and introduced advanced methods.

THE LABOUR FRONT

A real battle for grain was launched in the fields in 1941. There were victories and defeats, heroes and victims. The struggle for the harvest in front-line areas was really heroic. The slogan was "your job is your battlefield". And frequent-

ly the place of work was literally a battlefield when farmers collected the harvest and took it away under enemy gunfire.

Harvesting in areas near the front was regarded as a military assignment. Volunteers headed by Communists worked in the most dangerous places. Sentries and patrols guarded the fields and shocks; detachments of farmers made their rounds of the roads and guarded the grain against enemy paratroopers and raiders.

The Soviet peasantry spared no efforts in saving as much as possible from the invaders. In extremely difficult conditions they gathered in the harvest and created a food fund large enough to supply the army and the civil population. In the Ukraine the crops ripened later than usual, so the harvest had to be collected in double quick time if it were to be delivered intact to the rear. There was a shortage of machines and fuel, most of the men were mobilised, while many women were busy building defence lines.

Though the weather was bad, the collective farms succeeded, thanks to the heroic and diligent labour of peasants, in fulfilling the state plan of grain deliveries and creating a defence fund which fully met the needs of the army in the republic. According to rough estimates 1.25 million tons of grain and other farm products were moved from the Ukraine in August and the first 23 days of September.

The battle for bread was just as strenuous in the rear. Things were made worse by an acute shortage of transport and haulage facilities.

Party organisations mobilised the peasants in the struggle for bread; they displayed good discipline, orderliness and selflessness. Regional Party committees held plenary meetings under the slogan "Everything for the front, everything for victory". They drew up plans for harvesting. The resolution adopted by the plenary meeting of Sverdlovsk Regional Party Committee stated: "Grain means guns and ammunition, without which no victory is possible."

The problem of machine operators was exceptionally acute. In the early days of the war most of them were mobilised, and so there was a danger that many of the tractors would go unmanned. Party and Soviet organisations took urgent steps; they registered all people who had formerly attended courses in mechanics or worked as tractor or

harvester drivers and sent them to MTS and state farms. By August 13, 1941, 15,500 people had returned to the MTS. But that was not sufficient; many more specialists had to be trained. In July and August MTS, mechanics schools and agricultural educational establishments opened short courses for women and young people under military age. The course of instructions lasted for about one-quarter of the time before the war. It was very hard but gradually the courses got underway; some students combined work with study; the lessons lasted 12 hours a day; the instructors—engineers, team-leaders and mechanics—worked 15 and 16 hours a day.

The results were excellent—when harvesting began, the MTS were provided with a sufficient number of machine operators. In the middle of August 285,627 people, including 207,709 tractor drivers, 48,803 harvester drivers, and 29,115 assistants, had completed or were about to complete the courses. This huge army included 190,000 women.

The tractor and harvester pool was ready by August 15; the MTS exceeded the repairs plan by 2 per cent. But there were still not enough machines, so scythes, sickles and other obsolete farm implements were brought back into action. It was decided to employ draught animals, bull-calves and dry cows to the utmost.

Everybody, even accountants, book-keepers, team-leaders and other administrative workers in collective farms and state farms joined in the harvesting. Thousands of students, schoolchildren and townsfolk were mobilised for work in the fields.

Collective farms took in 67 per cent of the grain harvest with the help of horse-drawn machines and by manual labour, and state farms harvested 13 per cent. Peasants displayed great initiative. One invented a "dragger" for conveying sheaves to the thresher drum which did the work of 20 people; another designed a machine for sowing vegetables; a third made use of a combine motor for threshing. Sometimes the farmers stayed day and night in the fields; they worked two shifts at a stretch. The horses could not endure the strain; they had to be changed for every new shift; but the people, sleepless and hungry, found enough strength to work for 12 and even 18 hours at a time.

As a result of these heroic efforts the harvest in the rear was gathered in full. The collective farmers harvested grain from 51,630,000 hectares of land, i.e., from nearly the same sown area as in 1940 (52,750,000 hectares). The average yield was 0.7 tons per hectare as against 0.84-0.85 tons in 1940. The threshing, however, lagged far behind the level of previous years. Potatoes, sunflower, sugar beet and certain other crops were harvested at much slower rates. Winter and fallow ploughing was reduced because of war-time difficulties and bad weather. Much grain was lost due to rain, yet collective farms and state farms succeeded in gathering a reasonable harvest.

In the rear they reached 80 per cent of the target for the grain purchasing plan; the state received more than 17 million tons of grain. The great battle for bread in 1941 ended in victory. It was the first of many victories scored by the Soviet people during the war. Though it was not mentioned in war reports, it contributed to the favourable outcome of the war.

1941, as it turned out, was not the most difficult year. Food stocks, the bumper harvest of 1940 and seed stocks created in the autumn of 1940 and the spring of 1941, and well-repaired tractors lessened the difficulties.

The food problem became very acute at the height of the war. The Germans occupied a considerable amount of territory in the European part of the USSR. The principal agricultural regions—the Ukraine and the North Caucasus, and the basic regions where sugar beet, flax and oil crops were grown, remained in the hands of the enemy from 1941 to 1943. These areas accounted for 38 per cent of the pre-war production of grain, nearly 50 per cent of industrial crops, 87 per cent of sugar beet and a considerable portion of livestock products.

The whole responsibility for supplying the front and the rear with agricultural raw materials was shouldered by the peasants in the eastern areas.

It was an extremely difficult task. Before the war when the government took decisions on the development of agriculture in the eastern parts of the country, it provided machines for increasing the sown area. But during the war all supplies of tractors and farm machinery were practi-

cally stopped; moreover, many tractors, lorries and horses were given over to the army.

Manual labour became extremely important due to the sharp reduction of power resources. But manpower was also diminished—by nearly 3 million in 1941, 2.3 million in 1942, and 800,000 in 1943.

By the end of 1943 less than a third of the 1940 able-bodied male population remained on the collective farms. Farmers were mobilised both into the army and for industry. In the Urals and Siberia with their rapidly developing war industries the rural population was diminishing at a particularly rapid rate. It should be recalled that these regions had suffered from shortage of manpower even before the war; the sown area per farmer was twice that of the Ukraine, the Transcaucasia or the European part of the USSR.

Agriculture could only solve the complicated war-time problems by full mobilisation and maximum utilisation of internal resources. This was exactly what Party and Soviet organisations did.

The Party boldly faced up to the difficulties. Political departments—the Party's extraordinary political organs—were in operation in MTS and state farms from November 1941 to May 1943. They did political and organisational work among the peasants and strengthened their belief in ultimate victory. The political departments promoted efficient peasants to leading positions; they maintained discipline and improved labour organisation.

MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES

The drastic reduction of manpower in the countryside and the falling level of mechanisation called for tremendous efforts by the rural population.

The most outstanding contribution was made by peasant-women. Though they had to look after the children, and do men's work in the household, many of them became chairmen of collective farms, team leaders or managers of dairies.

Amazing progress was made in this respect in some of the eastern republics and regions where old customs had obstructed the promotion of women to leading posts.

In the period from 1940 to 1944 the number of women-chairmen increased from 2.6 to 11.8 per cent; that of book-keepers from 10.1 to 56.4 per cent; team leaders from 1.6 to 41.2 per cent, and managers of cattle farms from 16.1 to 49.2 per cent.

Nearly 400,000 women held responsible positions in collective farms at the end of 1943. Many of them had large families, but they also had sufficient experience in production.

The war opened the doors of public life to women and provided a substitute for the narrow interests of home and family. Women increased their knowledge and improved their qualifications, and soon got accustomed to their new status.

Before the war there had been few women tractor drivers, but as soon as the war broke out, women and young people of pre-military age became the principal source for replenishing the MTS personnel. They made up the bulk of the student body in schools and courses for machine operators. 1.5 million of the 2 million or more machine operators trained during the war were women.

One could see women driving tractors or harvesters, operating lathes, ploughing fields, tending cattle, carrying heavy sacks. They slept in the fields; late at night they knitted warm socks for the men in the army.

Before the war some executives claimed that women could not operate farm machines efficiently. The war proved them wrong. In 1942 women's tractor teams in Moscow Region worked much more efficiently than men's teams. By June 10 some 69 per cent of the women's teams and only 45 per cent of men's teams had completed the plan for sowing; 67 per cent of the women's teams and only 52 per cent of men's teams succeeded in saving fuel.

Old people and teenagers became involved in production. Some collective farms fully compensated for the shortage of manpower by mobilising women, teenagers and old people who had not been working before the war.

In 1940 only 60 per cent of rural teenagers were oc-

cupied in collective farm production; in 1942 the percentage jumped to 95. Millions of people who otherwise would have been studying or enjoying their retirement went to work in the fields.

But even then the problem of manpower was far from being solved. Right up to 1944 the loss of manpower was not fully compensated by such measures. In 1943-1944 many women and teenagers went to work in industry. The number of collective farmers in rear areas fell from 21.3 million in 1940 to 18.4 million in 1944—a decrease of 13.8 per cent.

The only way to cover the deficit was to step up the work of those who continued on the farms.

The Party did its best to make every toiler understand that his work was a contribution to the general cause of victory over the enemy. Propagandists, placards, the press and radio popularised the idea. Everybody knew that his job was his military assignment. The grain which the peasants grew went to feed the soldiers or those who manufactured weapons. Castor-oil lubricated the warplanes, cotton went for the production of gunpowder. People were fully aware of the importance of their work.

During the war collective farmers began to earn much more work-day units. This was particularly true of women and teenagers. In 1943 they earned 25 per cent more than in 1940. Women more than doubled their average annual performance.

The role of female labour grew considerably in the republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasia. Before the war there had been fewer women than men in social production, but in 1944 women accounted for 60 to 70 per cent of the work-force in collective farms, and earned nearly half of the work-day units. The increased labour productivity of women compensated for approximately half of the lost manpower; the increased output by women, men, teenagers and old people compensated for three quarters of the loss.

Most of the products were sent to the front, and this is why the payment in kind for each work-day unit was drastically cut. In 1942-1943 one work-day unit cost only 800 grams of grain and 200-400 grams of potatoes—nearly half of what it had been in 1940. The conditions of work became

much harsher. The lack of machines and draught animals compelled women to do much manual work.

Most of crawler tractors, and nearly three quarters of lorries were sent to the army. The remaining machines were in poor condition, many being completely worn out. The need for spares was enormous, but industry could supply no more than 30 or 40 per cent of the required amount. In these conditions it was decided in 1942 to launch a campaign for collecting and repairing spares.

By the spring sowing campaign of 1942, MTS and repair factories had restored more than 30 million rubles' worth of spares for wheel tractors—nearly half of the centralised annual supply. In 1942 and 1943 some 65 million rubles' worth of spares and tools were collected, restored or manufactured. Without distracting factories from fulfilling military assignments, the MTS and state farms repaired tens of thousands of tractors.

Though the level of mechanisation fell sharply, the MTS rendered a considerable service to the collective farms even during the grimmest years of war. In 1943 when the machine and tractor pool was in a deplorable state, ploughing was nearly 50 per cent and sowing and harvesting nearly 25 per cent mechanised.

Only the total mobilisation of internal reserves and the assistance of the working class helped to maintain the machine and tractor pool in operation. In spite of the sharp reduction of centralised deliveries and capital investments, the Soviet peasantry succeeded in maintaining the material and technical base of agriculture.

The working class helped the countryside in conducting important agricultural campaigns. The state took account of the requirements of the various sectors of the economy and directed manpower to places where it was most urgently required. The town and countryside maintained special exchange contacts. The countryside supplied the towns with manpower and in exchange it got seasonal workers. It was the only rational means of utilising manpower in those conditions.

The able-bodied population of town and countryside who were not occupied in industry or transport, some office employees, schoolchildren of 14 and over, and students were

mobilised for urgent seasonal work. This involved men of 14 to 55 and women of 14 to 50. Their work was paid in accordance with the general provisions at existing rates. Office employees continued to receive 50 per cent of their regular wages; students retained their grants.

In 1943 some 2.8 million people were mobilised for harvesting; in 1944 the figure was 3.3 million. Most of them were schoolchildren.

THE COUNTRY IN DANGER

Food deliveries were the decisive but not the only form of peasant assistance to the state and the army in the bitter struggle against the invaders.

War loan bonds were floated in the countryside. In 1942 collective farmers in many regions and republics paid in cash for the loan bonds.

Another important method of mobilising cash and material values was the war fund. This patriotic fund was initiated immediately after the German aggression began. Collective farmers sent in their money, war bonds and valuables. Women donated jewelry.

At the end of 1942 the people began to collect funds for munitions. The new movement was born in the countryside at the height of the battle of Stalingrad. It was initiated by the collective farmers of Tambov and Saratov regions. In October 1942 it was proposed at a meeting in the Signal Revolyutsii Collective Farm, Saratov Region, that money be collected for a warplane. The proposal was accepted and the farmers collected 170,000 rubles in one day. In November the plane was handed over to Hero of the Soviet Union Shishkin, himself a former farmer.

Soon the army began to receive many planes with the inscription "Saratov collective farmer". By December 10 the farmers in Saratov Region had collected 33.5 million rubles. In Tambov Region collective farmers collected 40 million rubles for the "Tambov collective farmer" tank column.

Early in December 1942 F. P. Golovaty, a bee-keeper from the village of Stepnoye in Saratov Region, donated

100,000 rubles for a plane which he asked to be sent to Stalingrad. His example was followed by many other farmers. In Saratov Region 44 collective farmers contributed from 100,000 to 300,000 rubles each. Large contributions were made by the Oskin brothers, prominent harvester drivers, and a team headed by P. N. Angelina.

Collective farmers sent trainloads of presents and warm clothes to the front. In the autumn women knitted warm things or made clothes after their work. This proved to be of very great assistance since the frosts in the European part of the USSR reached minus 45°C in 1941. In some places special shops were opened for making clothes and sheepskin coats for the army. In three months of 1941 collective farms sent to the front 1.2 million pairs of felt boots, more than 2 million sheepskin overcoats, 2.2 million pairs of woolen gloves and mittens, and more than 2 million sheepskin coats. Collective farmers in Saratov Region collected enough clothes, underwear, felt boots, wool and leather for at least 15 infantry divisions.

Throughout the war armymen were assisted by collective farmers. In their letters home, the soldiers thanked the farmers and promised to rout the enemy.

Collective farmers succeeded in solving the food problem. Agricultural production was naturally curtailed during the war; labour resources were few, machines were worn out, the major part of the production forces had been destroyed. This happened not only on the occupied territories but also in the rear. In 1942 the yields of grain in the rear dropped to 0.46 tons per hectare. Gross production of grain dropped by nearly 40 per cent. In 1943 the yields of many crops were even poorer than in 1942—0.39 tons per hectare. There was a drastic reduction in the number of cattle.

Thanks to measures taken by the Party and the Government the situation greatly improved in 1944-1945, but the growth of agricultural output was unstable; it was still below the pre-war level. The gross production of grain was less than 50 per cent of what it had been in 1940.

In spite of all the difficulties, however, the Soviet state succeeded in concentrating in its hands large amounts of commercial products thanks to the mobilisation of all the resources in the collective and state farms. In the period

from 1941 to 1945 the state stocked 69.8 million tons of grain. During World War I tsarist Russia succeeded in procuring only 22.9 million tons.

Domestic production in the Soviet Union far exceeded the supplies of food arriving from the United States, Britain and Australia. According to E. P. Stettinius, the head of the US lend-lease programme, the Soviet Union received 1.5 million tons of food from the United States.

Even in the most difficult years of the war the country had the required minimum of food supplies. The Soviet peasantry solved the food problem; it was their outstanding contribution to victory in the Great Patriotic War.

SOCIAL CHANGES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The tremendous afflictions suffered by the country during the war could not but leave an imprint on social development. The peasantry had always been a mighty reserve of manpower for the army and industry. During the Great Patriotic War this reserve was utilised to the full.

The peasant population was decreasing much more rapidly because of mobilisations into the army. In the period from 1936 to 1940 the peasant population was reduced by 2 per cent, while in the four years of the war it was reduced by 18 per cent. This affected mostly the able-bodied population. Only the group which included children under 12, old people, invalids and the sick grew slightly in size.

The diminishing peasant population resulted in a slight reduction of the number of households. In 1944 the peasant population was reduced by 18 per cent in comparison with 1940, while the number of households was reduced only by 4 per cent.

The relative stability in the number of households is explained by the fact that in war conditions family farmsteads were an important source of sustenance. Many old people who were registered as retired remained in collective farms and kept their own households. That was one of the

reasons why a considerable portion of the rural population are not working in the collective farms.

Actually, it meant that the size of families diminished and, consequently, family farmsteads became weaker.

At the end of the war these processes were characteristic of nearly all regions in the country. In the Ukraine and Byelorussia where few men were mobilised into the army before the occupation or where people remained in the rural districts because industries had been destroyed, the peasant population diminished to a lesser degree than in the country as a whole. In spite of German mobilisation those regions succeeded in retaining manpower for the army and industry.

Obviously the rate of influx of the rural population into industry could not be compared with the pre-war level because most of the manpower was mobilised by the army. Nevertheless, the countryside continued to replenish the working class. In the period from 1942 to 1944 some 1,380,000 peasants were recruited for regular work in industry.

The number of workers and office employees continued to grow at the expense of peasants. In 1936 the latter accounted for 60 per cent of the employed population, in 1945 they had accounted for only 47 per cent.

In the pre-war period social development in the countryside was characterised by an influx of peasants into collective farm production. The social character of the labour of collective farmers was becoming more pronounced. Collective farm property was accumulating and the incomes of peasants from social production were growing.

The war disrupted the consolidation of collective farms and the growth of their economy. The production mechanism of collective farms stopped improving, the level of mechanisation was reduced and manual labour predominant.

This, of course, affected distribution. The consumption funds were reduced and fewer products were handed out than before the war for the same work. The payments in grain and potatoes were decreased by approximately 60 per cent from 550 grams of grain and 330 grams of potatoes in 1940 to 180 grams of grain and 110 grams of potatoes in 1943. Meat, butter and milk were not distributed at all.

Thus it is easy to see why the peasants were so interested in developing their own family farmsteads. Indeed, workers and office employees affected by the ration system were also growing vegetables and raising cattle.

The changes in social and private production determined the latter's position in the incomes of the collective farmers. According to the Rules, family farmsteads were to be an additional source of income, but in fact they became the main source of sustenance. Selected data on budgets revealed that the incomes from work on the collective farm in cash and kind of even the most honest farmers did not exceed a third of their overall incomes.

Some collective farms paid nothing. In 1945, 5.4 per cent of the collective farms did not even pay in grain to their members; 37.5 per cent of collective farms paid only 300 grams of grain per work-day unit, and 75 per cent of collective farms distributed no potatoes.

The dependence of farmers on their own farmsteads increased their links with the market. They obtained everything but grain—the main product—from their farmsteads. They were compelled to go to the market and exchange milk, potatoes, and other products for bread. The peasants were short of salt, kerosene and fabrics. They got what they needed only by exchanging products.

The prices rose sharply, particularly during the first years of the war.

The purchasing power of the ruble was falling so quickly that it became unprofitable to sell in the market. The farmers, therefore, preferred barter trade with townsfolk.

These tendencies slowed down the process of bridging the gap between the peasantry and the working class, between town and countryside.

However, the war proved powerless to affect the basis of this process. The Soviet peasantry remained on the collective farms; the percentage of collectivisation during the war became even higher. As always, farmers spent much of their working time in collective farms. In 1940 women spent 35 per cent of their working time in their own households, and 65 per cent in the collective farms; in 1945 they spent only 31 per cent of working time in their households. Family farmsteads did not gain predominance over social

production. In essence, they served consumer aims, and they accounted for only a very small portion of sown area in the collective farm sector.

LIFE AND CULTURE DURING THE WAR

The weakening of the rural economy during the war had an adverse effect on cultural and living standards.

Sacrifices had to be made for the sake of supplying the army. Food was scarce and unnutritious. There were not enough proteins, fats and vitamins. Bread, potatoes, vegetables and milk were the principal products. Sugar and other processed food were in short supply. Sometimes there was not enough bread, milk and potatoes, so nettle, goose-foot and acorns were eaten.

There was practically no footwear or clothes. Clothes were either patched up or obtained by bartering for food. It was not surprising that in some villages, particularly in the liberated areas, the peasants wore home-made clothes and bast shoes.

The modernisation of villages came to a standstill. It was only after the war that the Party and the government resumed housing construction in the countryside. But in the liberated areas, housing construction was regarded as a priority task immediately after the Germans had been chased off. Millions of peasants there were left homeless. In Byelorussia 2 million people lived in dug-outs or barns. Nearly a third of peasant huts were destroyed.

Medical establishments were quickly opened in the liberated areas. That entailed a great deal of repair work and reequipping. By the beginning of 1945 there were 10,305 medical stations in the liberated areas—almost as many as in the pre-war period (10,384).

Medical service was greatly handicapped by the inadequate material and technical basis, and the lack of instruments and medicines. There were practically no transport facilities since all horses had been taken away by the army. At the beginning of 1945 nearly 35 per cent of medical stations had no transport of any kind.

In spite of this, the medical personnel accomplished a great deal during the war. In 1943 there was a reduction in the incidence of typhoid and spotted fever. From 1945 onwards birth rates in the countryside began to rise.

The Soviet state never neglected the education of the peasantry. The Great Patriotic War was a battle for culture against fascism and barbarity. It was not only a question of victory, but a question of safeguarding culture and literacy.

The state allocated great funds for education in spite of all the difficulties. Allocations for kindergartens were lavish. In those years many children were orphaned, and the state had to care for them.

Many changes in the system of school education were enforced due to the war-time conditions. The evacuation of children gave rise to the development of the boarding-school system.

The war also reinvigorated schools for young workers (in 1943) and young farmers (1944). Schools for young farmers were opened in large villages, collective farms, state farms, and MTS. They helped many young people to combine work with study.

The character of basic secondary schools in the countryside just as in towns was also undergoing a change. Military training was introduced as a major subject in 1942. The government took a decision to train schoolchildren for agricultural work. In the summer of 1942 some 3.5 million schoolchildren were working in collective farms and state farms in the Russian Federation.

One of the principal tasks was to see that the level of instruction and discipline did not drop. It was decided that military training or farm work would not be accepted as an excuse for poor progress.

There was an acute shortage of teachers because many of them were mobilised into the army. New teachers had to be trained. The majority of young teachers were assigned to the countryside. In the period from 1941 to 1943 some 89 per cent of the graduates from teachers' training colleges in the Russian Federation were sent to work in villages.

In 1945 there were 400,000 teachers in the countryside of the Russian Federation. It was a great army of cultural workers, whose influence all felt beyond the school. Many teachers became activists in collective farms and state farms; they conducted mass political work among the peasants.

There was a shortage of textbooks, exercise books and aids, though they were printed in many millions of copies during the war and old textbooks were utilised to the full. In many village schools there was only one textbook for a group of children, and two or three exercise books for each pupil.

Fuel was scarce. There was practically no electricity. Classes met in darkness or at best in candlelight and children had to sit in coats and felt boots.

Collective farms did their best to help the schools; they built or repaired the buildings and helped schools to cultivate their small plots of land.

This help was very extensive in the liberated areas where the invaders had destroyed most of the school buildings. In the Russian Federation, for instance, some 30 per cent of the schools were destroyed. The remaining schools had to be repaired. Yet as soon as the Germans were driven off, lessons were resumed.

The building of schools was given priority in the state programme for the rehabilitation of the liberated areas. The state allocated huge funds for the purpose; the rural population also contributed to the programme.

The war was, of course, a blow to the education of children. Many of them in the occupied areas had no opportunity to attend classes for two or three years. In the rear many children had to stop studying and join vocational schools or to go to work in collective farms. This was particularly true of pupils in senior classes. In the junior classes many pupils did not go to school because they lived too far away. Before the war children were brought to schools in horsecarts, but during the war practically no horses remained on collective and state farms. It was too difficult for 8- or 9-year old children, poorly clothed, to walk 6 or 7 kilometres to school.

In 1941-1942 approximately 10 per cent of schoolchil-

dren did not attend primary schools (1st to 4th grades) and 30 per cent did not attend junior high schools (5th to 7th grades). The situation was alarming, and emergency measures were taken. The local Soviets and their executive agencies registered all children of school age and did their best to enforce universal education.

In spite of all the difficulties of war-time there was no significant drop in the educational level of the peasantry. This should be regarded as a great achievement of Soviet power. It was the result of the socialist state's constant care for the cultural and educational growth of the peasantry.

The cultural and educational work in the countryside was not limited to schools. Newspapers, radio, films and lectures broadened the peasants' mental horizons.

Of course few peasants had the opportunity to subscribe to newspapers during the war because of the greatly restricted circulation. Feature films were shown rarely; in some remote areas peasants saw none for months and even years.

But there were plenty of lectures; newspapers were regularly read aloud. They could not, of course, compensate for the lack of other mass media, so it is not strange that farmers were poorly informed of life in the country at large. However, they kept in touch with the most important events. If the name of a town where fighting was going on meant nothing to a peasant woman, she still knew that the Red Army men were retreating or advancing.

Schoolchildren, the collective-farm activists and the village intelligentsia were best informed. They absorbed socialist culture and ideology and spread them to the masses.

The Great Patriotic War was a period when the stability and viability of Soviet socialist society, including the collective farm system—its important component—passed through a severe test.

THE CONCLUDING STAGE OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

I. REHABILITATION OF COLLECTIVE FARMS

THE FIRST POST-WAR SPRING SOWING

Collective farmers and all workers of agriculture passed with honours through the trials of war. The task now was to rehabilitate the collective farms in the shortest possible time and to overcome the aftermath of war. The invaders had destroyed up to 40 per cent of all collective farms and MTS in the USSR. They razed to the ground countless villages; hundreds of thousands of hectares of land were criss-crossed with trenches and covered with shell holes; for the moment they were of no economic value.

The rehabilitation of agriculture was started during the war. As soon as the German invaders had been ousted, the farmers began to collect their implements, elected boards of collective farms and organised teams. The organisational rehabilitation was proceeding quite rapidly, and by the end of the war 84,700 collective farms had been restored. The Soviet state and the working people in the rear offered great assistance. The state allocated building materials and credits. The MTS were restored, the cattle and farm machines which had been evacuated were returned.

During the war some 3,093 MTS were rehabilitated in the liberated areas; by the end of 1945 these areas received more than 3 million head of cattle and over 40,000 farm machines. But those were only the first steps towards eliminating the dire consequences of the invasion. It was difficult to provide the necessary assistance in war-time.

Early in 1946 the material resources of collective farms were much less than what they had been before the war. The tractor pool was reduced by nearly a quarter. Most of the tractors were worn out. There were practically no lorries. The shortage of machines could not be compensated by draught animals since the number of horses was cut by half. The loss of manpower was terrible.

Millions of agricultural workers perished at the front or in nazi concentration camps. There were practically no families without war victims.

A considerable portion of the rural population went to work in industry, construction or transport. Early in 1946 the number of able-bodied farmers decreased by nearly 33 per cent, and the number of men by more than 60 per cent. In some liberated areas the situation was exceedingly grave.

As a result, labour productivity fell sharply. In 1945 it was 43 per cent lower than before the war. The sown area was reduced, standards of cultivation fell, yields became smaller, the herd of livestock and its productivity decreased. Gross agricultural output in 1945 was only 60 per cent of the pre-war level.

The Party and the Soviet government worked out measures for the rehabilitation and further development of agriculture. In March 1946 a session of the USSR Supreme Soviet passed a law for the five-year economic development plan for 1946-1950. The plan envisaged the strengthening of the material and technical basis for collective and state farms, better yields of all crops, and full restoration of the pre-war agricultural output. It made provisions for increasing remuneration for collective farmers as against the 1940 level. It was also planned to abolish in 1946 the rationing of bread, flour, groats and noodles (macaroni, spaghetti, etc.).

Agricultural workers enthusiastically prepared for the spring sowing campaign. People in many districts launched a movement for the successful fulfilment of the assignments for the first year of the five-year plan. In February 1946 collective farmers and machine operators in Rostov Region appealed to all agricultural workers to start socialist emulation in preparing for the spring sowing. Cotton-growers in

Stalinabad Region proposed to turn 1946 into a decisive year in the drive to raise agriculture, particularly cotton-growing.

The words were backed by deeds. Machine operators and farmers worked enthusiastically. They used cows to plough the fields; even spades went into action. The quality was poor, of course, the rules of agrotechniques were often discarded, and the time-schedules were not always adhered to. The climatic conditions were also unfavourable, so it was improbable that the yields would be high.

To make things worse, a terrible drought hit the country in 1946. Moldavia, most of the Ukraine, the Central black-earth regions, the lower and middle reaches of the Volga and the Primorye Territory were affected. This drought was worse than in 1891 or 1921, and the afflicted area was much larger.

Large sown areas perished, in many districts the harvest did not even compensate the sown seed. On the whole, the average yields amounted to 0.46 tons per hectare—much less than in 1944-1945. The gross production of grain by collective farms was 61.5 per cent of the 1940 level. The drought slowed down the rehabilitation of agriculture and undermined the weak collective farms. But even in these circumstances the Soviet peasantry succeeded in meeting the country's essential requirements in bread. The state offered aid to the most afflicted areas. It allocated 2.4 million tons of seeds as credit for spring sowing. That proved enough to increase the sown acreage in 1947.

The decision of the USSR Council of Ministers and the CC CPSU of September 19, 1946, "On Measures for Eliminating the Violations in Collective Farms of the Rules of Agricultural Artel" was of great significance for the rehabilitation of agriculture and the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms. The decision said that those violations were manifested in the pilferage of collective farm lands and property and in violations of the democratic principles of management.

The CC CPSU and the Soviet government took a resolute stand in defence of collective-farm property.

The same decision instituted the Council for the Affairs of Collective Farms under the Soviet government. It was

headed by A. A. Andreyev, deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and it included prominent Party executives and chairmen of collective farms. Its functions were numerous. The Council had to check on the implementation of the decision, to work out measures for strengthening collective farms and to study suggestions on the development of collective farms. The Council was accorded broad powers. Its representatives in the republics, regions and territories were not subordinated to the local authorities. The Council's instructions for eliminating violations of the Rules of Agricultural Artel were binding on ministries, departments and local organs of power. One of the most important provisions in the above decision was the restoration of the democratic principles of management in collective farms. This was of great significance since it strengthened the sense of responsibility for the artel among farmers, encouraged initiative and contributed to the development of collective farm production.

THE POST-WAR PROGRAMME FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

In the first post-war year the efforts of the rural population and the whole Soviet people brought poorer results than had been expected. The drought was the principal cause. The backwardness of agriculture hindered the fulfilment of the five-year plan, the rehabilitation and development of economy.

In February 1947 the Plenary Meeting of the CC CPSU heard a report by A. A. Andreyev "On Measures for the Development of Agriculture in the Post-War Period". The meeting was attended by local officials who were very familiar with the needs of the countryside.

The plenary meeting specified the general tasks of the fourth five-year period in crop cultivation and animal-breeding. It was planned to increase the sown acreage and productivity. Great significance was attached to improving the technical equipment of agriculture as the basic mate-

rial prerequisite for its rehabilitation and subsequent development.

The plenary meeting formulated the Party's basic task in the development of the collective-farm system in the post-war period—the further organisational and economic consolidation of the agricultural artels. This task was directly linked with the special nature of that stage of the country's socialist construction. The Party regarded the agricultural artel as the most expedient form of agricultural production and the participation of the peasantry in the final stage of socialist construction and the gradual transition to communism. The plenary meeting instructed agricultural organs to draw up better forms for the organisation and remuneration of labour so as to encourage efficient and honest farmers. It was planned to help each collective farm family acquire a cow in two or three years' time. In this connection local Party and Soviet authorities and the boards of collective farms were instructed to help farmers acquire cattle and fodder.

The plenary meeting insisted on improving the methods of directing agricultural production, making it more efficient, and educating farmers and state farm workers.

The February plenary meeting formulated the Party's policy on the countryside in the post-war period and drew the attention of Party and government organisations to agriculture. This was one of the most important tasks, a primary prerequisite for the rehabilitation and development of the whole economy.

CHANGES IN THE NUMBER AND COMPOSITION OF THE PEASANTRY

Immediately after the war the rural population began to grow. The demobilised soldiers increased the number of the able-bodied population. The mass demobilisation began in the summer of 1945 and was completed in the spring of 1948. More than 8 million people returned to peaceful work, many of them returning to collective farms.

The rural population was increasing particularly rapidly in some of the formerly occupied regions. Hundreds of thousands of people who had been enslaved by the Germans were coming back. Approximately half of the repatriates returned to agriculture. Collective farmers who had been evacuated to the eastern parts of the country also came back; there was an organised migration to the liberated areas. In the period from 1945 to 1948 more than 257,000 families migrated from the eastern regions; 106,000 moved to the Ukraine, and 18,000 to the Crimea.

There was a growth of the collective-farm population in regions which had not been occupied by the Germans; this was due to natural increase, as well as to the return of demobilised servicemen.

But the growth was countered by the departure of villagers into industry and towns. This process was particularly intensive at the end of the five-year plan.

The need for manpower to rehabilitate towns, industry and transport was acute. The demobilised soldiers and the natural growth of the urban population could not meet this need, and so collective farms became an important source of labour. The peasants, moreover, were not sufficiently interested in the development of collective farm production. When demobilisation from the armed forces was completed in 1948, the reduction of the collective farm population became quite conspicuous. It increased from 64.5 million in 1945 to 65.9 million in 1947, and then dropped to 62.3 million in 1950 (exclusive of the Baltic republics and the western regions of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Moldavia). The number of workers and office employees increased by 12 million, and in 1950 it was 19 per cent higher than the pre-war level.

There were some changes in the composition of the collective farm population. The correlation of the various age groups became different. The percentage of the able-bodied population rose thanks to the arrival of the demobilised soldiers; the number of men sharply increased, particularly in the collective farms in Central Asia and Georgia (by 20-25 per cent during the five-year period). However, the pre-war structure of the collective farm population as a whole was not restored. The number of able-bodied people

at the end of the period was 26.7 per cent less than in 1940 (the Baltic republics, and the western regions of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Moldavia excluded). In some of the regions which had been occupied and in certain industrial regions in the rear the situation was even worse. The percentage of able-bodied people in the countryside was much lower than in towns. The labour resources were not restored in the first five years after the war. Collective farmers had less manpower than before the war. On the whole, the number of workers in agriculture in 1950 decreased by 3.1 million compared with 1940. Under the circumstances, the rehabilitation of agricultural production could only be achieved by raising the level of mechanisation.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL BASIS OF AGRICULTURE

The priority task was to replace the worn-out farm equipment and to supply the peasantry with modern machines.

Tractor and farm-machinery factories were restored and new ones built immediately after the war. The tractor factories resumed production in Stalingrad, Kharkov, and Chelyabinsk; new factories were commissioned in Barnaul, Vladimir and Lipetsk. The output of tractors, harvesters and other machines at the end of the fourth five-year period exceeded the pre-war level. In the five years after the war the industry manufactured considerably more tractors than in the five years preceding it.

Hundreds of new MTS were opened, mostly in the Baltic republics, Moldavia and the western regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia, where the peasants were incorporated in collective farms after the war. The MTS there were an important means for the socialist reorganisation of agriculture. At the end of the five-year period there were more MTS in the country than before the war.

The growth of the technical means helped to raise the level of mechanisation of agricultural work. In 1950 there

were nearly 600,000 tractors, 211,000 harvesters and 283,000 lorries. The machines were modern and more efficient. Power supply on collective and state farms was increased from 1.1 hp per employee in 1945 to 1.7 hp in 1950; 84 per cent of sowing of spring crops, 75 per cent of grain sowing and 53 per cent of harvesting was carried out using mechanical methods.

Electrification was another important step. The government adopted a decision on the electrification of agriculture on February 8, 1945; in 1950 the capacity of rural electric-power stations was trebled compared with 1945. In 1940 only 4 per cent of the collective farms had electricity, in 1950 the figure was 15 per cent; moreover, 80 per cent of MTS and 76 per cent of state farms received electricity. However, most of the electricity was consumed for domestic purposes. The supply for production purposes was limited, and the mechanisation of many labour-consuming processes, particularly in animal husbandry, was poor.

The machinery quickened the pace of farm work, reduced labour expenditure and improved agrotechniques. The growth of mechanisation considerably raised labour productivity: in 1950 it reached the pre-war level. Thus the most important prerequisites for the rehabilitation of agriculture were created.

TRAINING OF PERSONNEL FOR COLLECTIVE FARMS

The growth of mechanisation required better professional training of collective farmers, particularly of machine operators. During the first year after the war the army of farm machine operators was replenished by demobilised servicemen who had worked as tractor or harvester drivers before the war.

The bulk of machine operators were trained at courses in the MTS and in agricultural mechanisation schools. In 1948 there were 360 such schools; the number of graduates was increasing annually, and in 1950 these schools trained

513,000 machine operators. On the whole, nearly 2 million people were trained during the five-year period. True, many of them did not take up jobs in the MTS and collective farms, but the number of machine operators in 1950 reached 1,230,000. They accounted for only 4.5 per cent of collective farmers, but the percentage was steadily rising. More important was the role they played in collective farms. They were engaged in the most essential work, and were spreading advanced techniques. In state enterprises they acquired efficiency and the habits of organised labour.

Many former leaders of collective farm production returned to their posts after the war. The task now was to raise the efficiency of chairmen and team leaders. For this purpose one- and two-year schools and short-term courses were set up; during the five-year plan period they raised the qualifications of more than 250,000 collective farm activists. In 1947 many agricultural specialists from various organisations and educational establishments were assigned to the villages.

Gradually, the efficiency of chairmen and team leaders was improved. Many of them proved to be talented organisers and managers who succeeded in strengthening the collective economy.

Lieutenant-Colonel K. P. Orlovsky, Hero of the Soviet Union, demobilised from the Army was elected chairman of the Rassvet Collective Farm (Byelorussia) which had been completely ruined during the war. No horses were left after its liberation, and there were only four cows between 230 households. In 1950 the farm had a big herd of cattle, it collected good harvests, and its profits went up to nearly 1.5 million rubles. By the end of the five-year period the farm became one of the best in the country.

But a large proportion of the chairmen had insufficient knowledge and experience—a great obstacle to the rehabilitation of collective farms.

The training of executive personnel and machine operators was accompanied by mass agronomical and zootechnical education of collective farmers. It took various forms. Specialists of MTS, district departments of agriculture, teachers, chairmen of collective farms and team leaders

conducted lessons in study groups in line with the curriculum drawn up by the Ministry of Agriculture.

In the winter of 1947-1948 these courses and the seminars (including those for executive personnel) were attended by 3.7 million collective farmers. In the autumn of 1950 it was decided to open 3-year courses where students combined work with study. In the 1950-1951 academic year some 1.3 million collective farmers completed the courses and received certificates testifying that they had acquired a minimum of agro-zootechnical knowledge. In some regions agricultural specialists conducted lessons in village lecture-rooms.

All this helped to raise the professional and general educational level of farmers and improve their work. The professional structure of the collective farm population underwent a change thanks to the training of machine operators and agricultural specialists. At the beginning of 1951 there were 118,300 chairmen, 8,800 agronomists, 22,200 veterinarians and assistants, 4,600 zootechnicians, and 198,500 accountants and book-keepers. The village intelligentsia numbered more than 350,000 at the end of the period.

In addition there were 516,900 leaders of plant-growing teams, 245,600 managers of dairies, more than 700,000 group leaders, and thousands of other managers of collective farm production. The army of executives and leaders consisted of 1.3 to 1.4 million collective farmers. Many of them performed their functions while participating in direct production in dairies and fields. They had all completed advanced courses and had higher qualifications than was usual in farm work.

Thus, at the end of the five-year period some 2.6 million (9 per cent) collective farmers were machine operators, agricultural specialists, or workers in administration and auxiliary services. Their work was of a high standard, it approached that of work in industry or in state enterprises and organisations.

The numerical growth of Communists and Komsomol members was another indication of the rising cultural and political level of the peasantry. After the war the army of Communists in collective farms was replenished by demo-

bilised servicemen, Party activists who had been assigned from towns to the countryside and newly-admitted members.

As of January 1, 1947, some 23.4 per cent of all Communists in the country were employed in agriculture. By the end of the five-year period 784,500 collective farmers were members of the Communist Party—half of the membership of village Party organisations was made up of farmers; 60 per cent of collective farms had their own primary Party organisations.

The Komsomol was the Party's assistant in the countryside. In 1951 collective farm Komsomol organisations had a membership of more than two million. The Party and Komsomol stratum in collective farms was expanding, though the proportion in the total number of people employed in collective farm production was smaller than in industrial enterprises. However, Communists and Komsomol members were employed in key sectors of collective farm production. In 1947, for example, 47.9 per cent of Communists worked directly in teams and dairies, 13.3 per cent worked as chairmen, nearly 15 per cent as team leaders or managers of dairies, and 5.4 per cent as tractor drivers.

LABOUR ACTIVITIES OF COLLECTIVE FARMERS

The consolidation of the material and technical basis of agriculture and higher efficiency of cadres created favourable conditions for the rehabilitation of collective farms. The situation, however, remained tense. Heroic efforts by all peasants were required; the material incentives had to be increased. Farmers worked selflessly for the rehabilitation of their collective farms, they were confident of the future. Instances of inconspicuous selfless work were plenty in nearly all collective farms.

After the drought of 1946 there was a shortage of seed in spite of the supplies from the state. Sometimes farmers donated their food reserves of potatoes and grain for sowing.

It was a great pity for women but they had to harness their milk-cows to cultivate the fields.

Socialist emulation gave birth to a conscious attitude towards labour; it was a great moral incentive. The Plenary Meeting of the CC CPSU in February 1947 reinvigorated the emulation. In 1947-1948 the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet passed decrees on awarding the title of Hero of Socialist Labour and other medals and orders to collective farmers and state farm and MTS workers for bumper harvests. Record results in crop-growing and animal-breeding came to be considered on a par with major achievements in industry, science, engineering and with acts of heroism during the war.

Socialist emulation was assuming a mass scale. Teams, collective farms, districts, whole regions and even republics vied with one another in agricultural production.

In 1948 competition started between tractor and crop-growing teams.

In some regions the emulation during sowing and harvesting was conducted among people by professions. Targets were set for each field of collective-farm production; selfless labour and knowledge of agrotechniques were indispensable if the aim was to be achieved. In the wheat-growing areas the target was a 1.6-ton yield per hectare; in flax production the task was to get a ton of fibre per hectare, in cotton-growing the target was 3 tons of cotton; and in sugar-beet production—50 tons per hectare.

The scope of emulation and its results were of course adversely affected by the insufficient material interest of farmers in collective production, especially in economically weak collective farms. In such farms the awards for good results could not seriously influence the attitude to work in the collective economy. Most of the good results were achieved by strong collective farms which were in a position to pay farmers additional work-day for exceeding planned yields of crops and increasing productivity of livestock. This, of course, raised the material interest of the farmers.

The collective farm system produced thousands of experts in crop cultivation and livestock-breeding. Great efforts were required in those difficult conditions to raise good harvests

and increase the productivity of livestock. Nevertheless M. Y. Ozerny, Hero of Socialist Labour, succeeded in growing record harvests of corn.

Consistently good harvests were achieved by T. S. Maltsev, an agronomist from the Zavety Ilyicha Collective Farm in Kurgan Region. This self-taught farmer-scientist popularised at agrotechnical congresses and conferences and in the press the measures which he had worked out for raising yields. He was elected to the scientific council of the Sverdlovsk Agricultural Institute; in 1947 he was nominated for election to the All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences as corresponding member.

The achievements of Basti Bagirova, a deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet and a leader of a group of cotton-growers, were known all over the country.

Many adopted the progressive methods of raising bumper harvests as worked out by M. Y. Yefremov, P. F. Varivoda and other advanced collective farmer innovators.

The best collective farms in the country owed their success to the introduction of new and progressive methods of crop cultivation and cattle-breeding.

In the period from 1946 to 1950 the Soviet state awarded medals and orders to more than 161,000 leading workers in agriculture; nearly 5,500 were awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour. Among them were many women and young people; the title of Hero of Socialist Labour was won by more than 1,000 Komsomol members; in addition more than 18,000 were awarded orders of various kinds.

Never before had the Soviet state given so many awards to collective farmers and other agricultural workers. This was recognition of the importance and difficult nature of their work, and of their great contribution to the development of the whole economy. The awards stimulated the collective farmers to work more efficiently and increase labour productivity.

In 1950 an able-bodied collective farmer earned on average 251 work-days as compared with 250 in 1945. But in 1948-1949 the work quotas in collective farms were considerably higher and so it became harder to earn the work-day.

GROWTH OF COLLECTIVE FARM PRODUCTION

The selfless labour of collective farmers, workers and specialists of state farms and MTS, who were equipped with new machines, was a primary prerequisite for the rehabilitation of agriculture during the post-war period. As a result, the sown area was gradually increased, the fields laid waste during the war were put to the plough. During the five-year period the sown area was increased by an average of 8 million hectares a year. The total sown area increased from 113.8 million hectares in 1945 to 146.3 million in 1950. The area sown to industrial crops and grass was enlarged quicker than the area sown to grain.

Agrotechniques were slightly improved. Winter ploughing and correct crop rotation became more widespread; more fertilisers were being employed. In 1950 some 63 per cent of spring sowing was done on winter-ploughed fields (22 per cent in 1946), 72 per cent (60 per cent in 1946) of the sown area was given over to grade seeds. Fallow land played a bigger part in crop rotation. The collective farms began to build a lot of reservoirs and plant forest-belts for protecting the fields.

In 1947, immediately after the year of the drought, agriculture began to make good headway. In most parts of the Soviet Union spring arrived quite early, and the beginning of summer was sufficiently warm and humid. Dry weather came in autumn. The production of potatoes, grain and other crops rose sharply. In subsequent years the yields and gross production of staple crops continued to grow. In 1950 collective farms collected twice as much grain as in 1945—81.2 million tons against 47.3 million. The yields were raised from 0.56 to 0.79 tons per hectare. However, the targets of the five-year plan for raising the yields and gross output were not reached as there were losses due to lack of harvesters.

The production of industrial crops was making better headway. In 1950 the pre-war production levels of sugar beet and cotton were surpassed. The herd of livestock in the collective farms also reached its pre-war level.

Overall, the gross agricultural output in 1950 was only 99

per cent of the pre-war level, but labour productivity was 8 per cent higher. Thanks to the heroic efforts of peasants helped by the working class with the Communist Party at the helm, the rehabilitation of agriculture was almost complete.

SOCIALIST REORGANISATION OF AGRICULTURE
IN THE BALTIC REPUBLICS
AND THE WESTERN REGIONS OF BYELORUSSIA,
THE UKRAINE AND MOLDAVIA

Collectivisation in the Baltic republics and the western areas of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and Moldavia was successfully completed in 1948-1950. Agriculture there was reorganised along socialist lines under conditions of triumphant socialism and the collective-farm system when the country had created a powerful socialist industry which could provide new machines to the collective farms. The Communist Party had accumulated by then rich experience in promoting socialism in the countryside, experience which was utilised by Party organisations in the new regions. Of course there were difficulties arising out of the war. Many households had been ruined; many farmers had been misled by anti-Soviet and anti-kolkhoz propaganda, by the nazis and their henchmen. The situation was made worse by the vigorous anti-Soviet activity of bourgeois nationalists and the remnants of various armed bands which were terrorising the population. The developed *khutor* system in some districts added to the difficulties.

The economic evolution in the countryside and the tremendous work done by the Party and the Soviet state persuaded the peasants of the need for collectivisation. After the liberation the farmhands, poor and middle peasants were helped by the Soviet state to restore their farmsteads. They received land and much of the property which had belonged to the landlords, kulaks and the henchmen of the invaders. MTS and machine-and-horse hire stations which were reopened or newly established after the war helped peasants

to do the most difficult work. In 1948 there were 62 MTS in Latvia, 54 in the western areas of Moldavia, and in 1950 56 in Estonia. At the end of the five-year plan there were nearly 700 MTS with thousands of tractors and other machines in the Baltic republics and the western areas of the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

Guided by Lenin's co-operative plan, the Communist Party skilfully employed the primitive forms of peasant associations for preparing the way to collectivisation. These were land societies in the western areas of the Ukraine and agricultural co-operatives in the Baltic republics. In 1949, for instance, agricultural societies incorporated 77 per cent of peasant households in Latvia, and nearly 70 per cent in Estonia. Some of them cultivated unowned and fallow land which was quite plentiful after the war. The joint utilisation of this land proved the advantages of collective work and paved the way for collective farming.

State farms which were newly established or re-instituted after the war also popularised the advantages of large-scale farming.

One of the primary prerequisites for socialist reorganisation of agriculture in the new areas of the country was the consolidation of local Party and Komsomol organisations. Thousands of Communists and Komsomol members went back to the villages after demobilisation; Party and Komsomol ranks were replenished by local activists. Many Communists from eastern areas and industrial centres were sent to work in the countryside. At the beginning of 1949 there were 1,128 village Party organisations in the western regions of the Ukraine; they had a membership of nearly 38,000 Communists. In Estonia village Party organisations had a membership of almost 3,000. Communists did mass political work among the peasants and battled against anti-Soviet elements which were obstructing the socialist reconstruction of the countryside.

As a result the necessary material, technical, political and organisational prerequisites were created for socialist reorganisation of agriculture.

In the western republics and regions collective farms were already being founded or restored in the period 1945-1946. At the end of 1945 there were 145 collective farms in the

western regions of the Ukraine; in 1946 there were 132 collective farms in the western regions of Byelorussia and 93 in the western areas of Moldavia.

On May 21, 1947, the Party's Central Committee adopted a resolution "On the Collectivisation in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia". Proceeding from Lenin's co-operative plan and the experience of the socialist reorganisation of agriculture in the USSR, the Central Committee explained to the Party organisations in the new Soviet republics that collectivisation should be gradual and carried out strictly on a voluntary basis. The resolution underlined that poor peasants should be the first to be recruited into collective farms; the latter were to be set up first in the vicinity of technically well-equipped MTS; collective farms should become modern undertakings capable of showing their advantages to the full. In line with this resolution Party organisations and village Communists launched a mass political and organisational campaign in the countryside. The peasants were impressed by the economic achievements of collective farms which had been set up in the period 1946-1948. Individual peasants went to those farms to see the successes for themselves.

In 1949 mass collectivisation, which soon turned into a drive for full collectivisation, was launched in the western areas of Moldavia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic republics. It was accompanied by a sharp struggle against kulaks and bourgeois nationalists who stubbornly resisted the construction of socialism in the countryside. However, the kulaks had already been greatly weakened. Many of them who had been collaborating with the enemy either escaped or were justly punished immediately after the liberation.

The measures which had been taken before mass collectivisation also produced good results, but still the last exploiter class offered a furious resistance. Kulaks and nationalists joined hands with the remaining nazi collaborationists. They committed acts of terror against village activists, set fire to collective farm buildings, conducted anti-Soviet propaganda campaigns and resorted to threats and terror so as to frustrate the socialist reorganisation of the countryside. Many Communists, Soviet officials and peasants who championed the collectivisation fell victim to kulak and nationalist terror.

In the period from 1944 to 1947 the nationalists murdered 3,144 Party and Soviet activists, 310 of whom were Communists, in Stanislaw Region alone.

The enemies terrorised not only the organisers and leaders of collective farms, but also peasants who decided to join the collective farms.

Neither terror nor hostile propaganda could stop the socialist reorganisation of the countryside. In 1949, when the masses of peasants resolutely took the road of collectivisation, the Party went over from a policy of restricting and ousting the kulaks to one of expropriating the kulaks as a class. Their cattle and horses, farm implements and buildings were confiscated and handed over to the collective farms; kulaks and henchmen of the German invaders were exiled to remote places.

From the very outset much attention was paid to the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms. In this respect a big part was played by the MTS which served the needs of the new collective farms and performed the most difficult work. The Soviet state extended many privileges to the collective farms so as to stimulate their economic growth. The political departments in the MTS, which were instituted in 1950 by a decision of the Party's Central Committee, did a great deal of work in the political education of farmers and the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms.

The results achieved by the new collective farms dispelled the doubts of vacillating peasants. The mass of peasants decided to join collective farms. By the end of 1950 some 27,000 collective farms had been set up; 83.7 per cent of peasant households were collectivised in the western areas of Byelorussia, 98 per cent in the Ukraine, and 96 per cent in Latvia. Collectivisation was complete in the main in Estonia, Lithuania and the western areas of Moldavia. This was a great victory for the Party and the Soviet people. Millions of peasants in the new republics and regions had taken the road indicated by Lenin—the road to socialism. The collective-farm system had triumphed all over the country.

IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING
AND CULTURAL STANDARDS

The rehabilitation and consolidation of collective farms was accompanied by a rise in living and cultural standards. We have already said that payment for work-days in money and kind could only be made after the fulfilment of obligations and payments to the state, the settlement of accounts with the MTS and deductions into the various public funds. In the post-war years the state had to take from collective farms the bulk of grain, potatoes, industrial crops and animal products as obligatory deliveries so as to supply the needs of the country. A considerable portion of the harvest went to pay the services of the MTS.

In 1947 it was decided to set aside 16.2 per cent of the gross intake of grain, 27.8 per cent of potatoes and 30.4 per cent of cash incomes for paying for the work-day. Subsequently, the value of work-days was gradually increased, but even at the end of the five-year plan it was still well below the pre-war level. In 1950 collective farms distributed for the work-days 35 per cent of their cash incomes and 18.7 of their grain production against 41.6 and 19.9 per cent respectively in 1940. The value of work-days varied from zone to zone, and so the incomes of collective farmers in different parts of the country were not the same.

The procurement prices for industrial crops, particularly for cotton, were high. The cotton-growing collective farms received additional incomes as bonuses for exceeding the procurement plans. In Tajikistan, Turkmenia and Uzbekistan the cash incomes were two or three times higher than in 1940. The collective farms in Transcaucasia which grew citrus fruits, tea, grapes and cotton also received high incomes. They distributed many products and cash for the work-days, and they had sufficient funds for building work.

The situation was different in the major part of the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Kazakhstan where the majority of collective farms were producing food crops and animal products. They derived little income from the delivery of produce to the state and could not afford to distribute much money for the work-days.

In 1950 the per capita distribution of grain reached 170 kg; in the RSFSR it was 164 kg, in the Ukraine—165 kg, and in the republics of Central Asia—243 kg.

On the whole, however, farmers received twice as much potatoes, grain and money per capita as in 1945. Their incomes were approaching the pre-war level; the incomes of machine-operators had in 1949 surpassed this level by 77 per cent. Their work-day brought them 2 or 3 kg of grain and 2.5 rubles in cash; in September 1951 the work-day brought them an income of 4 to 7 rubles in cash, depending on the region where they worked.

An important source of income was the family farmstead. The size of the lot of land around the house varied from 0.25 to 0.5 hectares; most of the lot was sown to potatoes, vegetables and grain crops. The lot provided the family with all their potatoes and vegetables. Some income was derived from livestock and poultry.

In 1947 the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a resolution "On Assistance to Cowless and Horseless Collective Farmers in Acquiring Cattle". The state granted credits for this purpose, and some assistance was to be provided by the collective farms. By the beginning of 1950 the number of cowless households had gone down to 15.2 per cent, but still the pre-war level was not reached. At the end of the five-year plan 40 per cent of collective-farm households had no cows.

Farmers sold a considerable portion of animal and poultry products in the market at high prices. In 1950 they derived nearly a third of their incomes from sales in the market. On the whole, the family farmsteads greatly contributed to the budgets of farmers in the post-war period.

The per capita incomes in kind derived from collective production and family farmsteads amounted to 200 kg of grain and 636 kg of potatoes a year. During the five-year plan income from grain increased by 100 per cent and that from potatoes by 50 per cent. At the end of the period farmers had enough grain and potatoes for themselves and even for fodder and the market. In addition they got milk, meat, vegetables and other products from the collective farm and their own farmsteads.

Farmers could afford to buy more clothes, fabrics and

footwear. Consumer co-operatives, which catered mostly for the rural population, increased their turnover from 4,217,000,000 rubles in 1940 to 9,051,000,000 rubles in 1950. The percentage of non-foodstuffs went up from 46.4 to 50.3. In 1950 farmers bought six times more fabrics than in 1945.

Farmers, particularly in economically strong farms, began to buy more items for recreational needs, watches, sewing machines and other merchandise.

The steadily growing social funds were an important factor in raising the living standards. Thousands of children received free education in schools, nurseries and kindergartens.

It is worth noting that the advanced farms set up special food funds to assist the families of soldiers killed in the war and old people. Many collective farms allocated lots of land for sowing grain and vegetables to help war invalids and the families of soldiers killed in the war.

The rising living standards began to change the face of the villages. Villages in the formerly occupied regions were rising from the ashes. Collective farms organised builders' teams to repair or build new houses for the farmers on specified terms. Much help was given by industrial workers. In the Ukraine, for instance, they built or repaired more than a million houses, 37,000 cultural and communal buildings, and a considerable volume of production premises.

Building work in the areas which had not been occupied proceeded unevenly, particularly in districts where weak collective farms were predominant. This was due to the economic difficulties and shortage of manpower. The republics of Central Asia resumed the resettlement of peasants from tents to houses. In the period from 1947 to 1950 nearly 40,000 families were moved into houses. In 1950 more than 30 collective farms in Tajikistan had their master plans of housing construction. Some 2,698,000 houses were built in the countryside during this period. True, a lot of people continued to live in dug-outs, and many houses in the liberated areas had no amenities. However, considerable progress was made in improving the living conditions.

Cultural and educational work was also being improved. New libraries and reading-rooms were being opened. The number of libraries increased from 37,900 in 1945 to 102,300

in 1950; the number of clubs, from 88,000 to 116,000 in the same period. The book fund was not very rich, yet it was used to the full. In 1950 readers borrowed on average 14 books and magazines. Films were shown more and more frequently. At the end of the period there were 60 per cent more film projectors than in 1940.

Local Party and Komsomol organisations, and the intelligentsia did a great deal of cultural and educational work among the peasants. Propaganda groups and village lecture-halls functioned in many districts.

Gradually, the aftermath of war in the education of children and young people was being overcome. During the war many of them had had to leave even primary schools. In the course of the fourth five-year period they resumed studies in evening schools, without leaving their jobs. There were two types of school: primary (1-4 forms) and seven-year (1-7 forms). The number of pupils increased from 337,000 in 1945-1946 to 514,000 in 1950-1951. About 259,800 of them attended the primary schools.

An important step was taken at the end of the period for advancing culture in the countryside. Universal seven-year education, which had already been promulgated in towns, was introduced in the countryside in the autumn of 1949. This involved all children of school-age and it stopped the drop-outs from the primary school. The number of schoolchildren increased from 18.5 million in 1945-1946 to 22.1 million in 1950-1951. During this period 2,600 schools were built in the countryside (apart from the schools built by collective farms). This provided places for 500,000 children.

The transition to universal seven-year education and the emphasis on evening schools in the villages were extremely important in the cultural life of the countryside; it was evidence of the great attention which the Party and the Soviet government paid to the village toilers. These events contributed to the solution of the problem of trained village personnel. Educated young people joined production. In subsequent years it became easier to supply the necessary qualified personnel for the collective farms.

The political awareness and activity of peasants were growing. This was clearly manifested in loyalty to the

country, selfless labour, and in their reaction to the most salient political and public events in the country.

The post-war period was marked by two elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (in 1946 and 1950), the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and autonomous republics (in 1947-1948) and to the local Soviets (in 1950). All collective farmers actively participated in the campaigns. In 1946, 217 collective farmers, directly engaged in production, were elected deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Peasants elected thousands of their representatives to the local Soviets. In 1948 and 1950 more than a million deputies represented them in local Soviets. In 1950 collective farmers accounted for 59 per cent of the deputies to the local Soviets. The numerous representatives of the peasantry together with representatives of the working class and the intelligentsia actively participated in the solution of all problems, big and small.

II. NEW HORIZONS

THE NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN

In October 1952 the Party's 19th Congress summed up the results of the country's development during the war and in the post-war period of rehabilitation.

Industry scored outstanding successes. It fulfilled the Fourth Five-Year Plan in 4 years and 3 months. In 1948 the 1940 level of industrial production was exceeded. The sector of industry which was manufacturing the means of production was forging ahead. In 1951 it surpassed the pre-war level by 140 per cent. That was accomplished thanks to great investments by the socialist state. In the period from 1946 to 1950 the state invested in industry 157,500 million rubles of the total of 250,300 million capital investments in 1945 current prices. Thus the supply of new machinery and labour productivity were raised. Industry was gaining in scale and scope with every passing year.

Agriculture, however, found itself in a slightly different position. In the period from 1946 to 1949 it was developing at a fast pace, but in 1950-1953 the growth rates dropped. In fact the gross intakes and purchases of grain remained at the same level. One of the main reasons for this lack of growth was insufficient capital investment—only 19,900 million rubles or about one-eighth of investment in industry in 1946-1950. The disparity was due to the need to allocate tremendous sums for defence in view of the threat of atomic war. Of course there were also errors in the management of agriculture.

The directives of the Party's 19th Congress instructed that gross production of grain be raised by 40 to 50 per cent, that of meat and lard by 80 to 90 per cent, and that of milk by 45 to 50 per cent. Capital investments in agriculture were raised by 110 per cent compared with the preceding five-year period.

Agriculture was given priority rates of development. The Communist Party and the Soviet government looked for reserves and for ways and means of using material and manpower resources in the most rational way possible.

AMALGAMATION OF COLLECTIVE FARMS

The amalgamation of collective farms was an important step in the further development of agriculture. The step was necessitated by the evolution of agricultural production. Material and technical standards and the qualifications of specialists and organisers in collective farms were considerably raised in the post-war period. This created the prerequisites for boosting agricultural production. However, the rational utilisation of machinery, labour resources and the achievements of science and technology were hampered by the limited size of collective farms. In 1949 nearly 70 per cent of the collective farms had not more than 500 hectares of sown area, and 37.4 per cent of them had less than 200 hectares. It was hard for small collective farms to develop livestock-breeding, do construction work, keep specialists and

ensure increasing collective incomes and the living standards of their members.

On May 30, 1950, the Party's Central Committee adopted a resolution on the amalgamation of collective farms and the ensuing tasks of Party organisations. The Central Committee regarded the amalgamation of small collective farms as "one of the most important measures for the further development of agriculture and the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms". It therefore drew the attention of local Party organisations and Communists who worked in Soviet and agricultural organisations to the fact that the amalgamation should be conducted on a voluntary basis with strict observance of the democratic principles of collective farm self-government.

The resolution triggered off a broad movement for the amalgamation of small collective farms. By the end of 1950 some 252,000 small collective farms were amalgamated into 121,400 large farms. The mass amalgamation was completed in 1951-1952 and, as a result, the number of collective farms in 1953 was reduced to 91,200.

In 1953 collective farms had on average 220 households, 4,211 hectares of farmland, 1,407 hectares of ploughland, 298 head of livestock, 770,000 rubles of non-distributable assets, and 547,000 rubles of income. The scale of their economy was increased by a factor of two to four.

The amalgamation had a favourable influence on other aspects of life on the collective farms. The administrative and management personnel was reduced. In the Central black-earth region there was a 55,000 reduction in administrative personnel; this saved the collective farms more than 40 million work-day units.

The amalgamation was followed by a growth in the ranks of village Party organisations and a reinvigoration of Party and political work. In the Ukraine, for instance, only 52 per cent of collective farms had Party organisations at the beginning of 1950; in 1951 Party organisations were functioning in 80 per cent of the collective farms. Prior to the amalgamation, Party organisations in collective farms had fewer than 3 or 5 Communists; after it the membership increased to 10-15 Communists. But it was not only a matter of numerical strength—Party organisations began to pay at-

tention to all aspects of collective-farm production and to exert their influence on it.

Not all the opportunities opened up by the amalgamation were immediately realised. Much work had yet to be done for the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms. It was necessary to stimulate building work, crop rotation and land-management. In the first few years after the amalgamation, many collective farms experienced difficulties because of violations of crop rotation, disruption of labour organisation and placement of personnel and the distribution of the collective-farm budgets. These difficulties were being eliminated gradually during the process of the organisational and economic consolidation of collective farms.

The amalgamation was continued in subsequent years. By the end of 1958 there were only 67,700 collective farms in the country. Artels had on average 276 households, 4,501 hectares of farmland (including 2,128 hectares of ploughland), 463 head of livestock, 2,485,000 rubles of non-distributable assets, and an income of 1,957,000 rubles in cash. Collective-farm property was accumulated at a fast pace in the post-war period. The scale of the collective economy was increasing.

ORGANISATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION OF COLLECTIVE FARMS

The amalgamation of collective farms raised the level of their technical equipment and labour productivity. The state expanded the output of farm machinery by old factories, and commissioned new ones. In 1950 the country had seven tractor and 10 harvester factories against only two before the war. In 1953 the production of tractors went up by 250 per cent.

In the period from 1949 to 1953 agriculture received 371,800 tractors (in physical units), 208,300 harvesters, 335,600 lorries, 32,400 grain-cleaning machines and a great

deal of other farm machinery. By the beginning of 1954 the number of tractors in operation had exceeded the 1941 level by 40.1 per cent; the number of harvesters had surpassed the same level by 74.7 per cent, and the number of lorries by 85.9 per cent.

The technical performances of the machines were improved considerably. Industry increased the output of crawler and rowcrop tractors; dozens of new types of farm machines were designed. This enabled collective farms to mechanise many of the work processes. In 1953 they mechanised 191 processes compared with only 90 in 1940.

In 1953 the development of fallow land had a 97 per cent level of mechanisation (83 per cent in 1940); the sowing of grain crops was 91 per cent mechanised (56 per cent in 1940); the figure for harvesting was 78 per cent (43 per cent in 1940), and for hay-making 52 per cent (4 per cent in 1940). However the mechanisation was only limited to the principal farm work, while many processes were still based on manual labour. In the same year only 25 per cent of potato sowing was mechanised; mechanical harvesting of potatoes was limited to 10 per cent, harvesting of flax to 31 per cent, and silage-production to 48 per cent. Mechanisation of cattle-breeding was poor, and most of the work in dairies was done by hand.

The high level of mechanisation, however, did not increase the yields of agricultural crops. There were many reasons for this, the most important being that the time-schedules of seasonal work were violated. The machines in the MTS were not always utilised efficiently, many of them remaining idle because of the poor quality of repairs and maintenance. The protracted duration of ploughing, sowing and harvesting adversely affected the quality of cultivation and yields. The situation was made worse by the shortage of mineral fertilisers, poor selection and production of seed, violations of agronomic techniques, etc.

The collective farms were in great need of advanced personnel, agronomists, zootechnicians, machine operators and engineers. The training of machine operators required particularly great efforts. It was not keeping pace with the growing numbers of tractors and other machines. The material incentives were far below the level offered in towns,

and so the problem was aggravated. Every year up to 30 per cent of tractor drivers left the countryside for the towns. The shortage of drivers and mechanics was felt particularly during seasonal work. Many machines often worked one shift only. However, there was some progress in this respect compared with the pre-war period. In May 1953 there were 1,705,000 machine operators, including 1,398,000 in the MTS, 163,000 in collective farms and 144,000 in state farms—an increase of 21 per cent over the 1940 level.

Chairmen of collective farms became more efficient. During the amalgamation many agricultural specialists, and Party and Soviet executives with agricultural experience were promoted to the posts of chairmen. In Voronezh, Tambov and Kursk regions 16.8 per cent of collective-farm chairmen had been educated in higher institutions or complete secondary school courses, 25 per cent had an incomplete secondary education, and 58.7 per cent a primary education.

There was an acute shortage of specialists with higher and secondary qualifications. In 1950 there were only 11,600 specialists in collective farms; only 594 of them had a higher education, and 10,900 had special secondary education. Most of the agronomists, zootechnicians and veterinaries were employed by the MTS, district agricultural departments or other organisations.

Much was done to reinvigorate the public forms of managing the collective farms. Farmers actively participated in the board-election campaigns in 1951-1952. According to the reports from 37 republics, territories and regions, the board-report meetings were attended by 68.7 per cent of the total membership of collective farms. A businesslike approach was manifested in the discussions; many farmers criticised the leaders, and many of the latter were replaced by new executives.

The work of farmers greatly depended on the organisation and remuneration of labour. The basic unit in the collective farm was the team. It was responsible for raising the yields and the rational utilisation of manpower and machinery. Early in the 1950s the importance of team work was underestimated in some parts of the country. Some collective farms began to organise independent groups for the cultivation of

5 to 10 hectares of land under grain. They were well supplied with machines and implements, but the fragmentation of teams proved unjustified, and soon the idea was discarded. The team remained the basic unit in the collective farm.

In the difficult post-war years the Party did much to raise the material incentives for farmers in collective production. In advanced farms labour was well rewarded, but in many artels the pay was still inadequate. In 1950 only half of the collective farms in the country paid more than a kilogram of grain per work-day unit; some districts even failed to reach the 1940 level.

In the republics of Central Asia and Transcaucasia and in the Stavropol and Krasnodar territories the pay was higher because of the difference in the purchasing and delivery prices for agricultural produce. The price policy did not take into account the yields of crops in different regions or climatic and natural conditions. So it happened that the state paid equal prices for grain produced in the Ukraine and the North-West regions though the production costs there were different. That was why some collective farms received high incomes while others suffered losses. Moreover, prices for grain, animal produce, potatoes and vegetables were far too low to stimulate their increased production by collective farms and their members; these prices did not provide adequate incomes. The collective farms which were producing citrus fruits, cotton, sugar beet and tea found themselves in the most advantageous position. They had a comprehensive system for encouraging production and raising the quality of produce. These collective farms received high incomes and were in a position to remunerate the labour of their members equitably. Here are some characteristic data. In Central Asia the cotton-producing collective farms derived an income of 17 to 36 rubles per work-day unit needed for the production of cotton; from the sale of technical crops to the state the collective farms in the USSR as a whole derived an income of nearly 18 rubles per work-day unit; but from the sale of animal products they derived an income of only 5 rubles, slightly more than 4 rubles in Uzbekistan, and even less than that in some other regions.

So there was a broad spectrum of collective farm incomes throughout the Soviet Union. According to Soviet economists, in 1952 the incomes of a collective farm household fluctuated between 60 rubles (in Byelorussia) and 85 rubles (in Lithuania) in regions where the prices for potatoes were extremely low. In the republics which specialised in the production of cotton the incomes were 18 times higher, ranging from 1,053 rubles in Tajikistan to 1,087 rubles in Uzbekistan.

Although there were some successes in the development of collective farm production in the period from 1951 to 1953, the growth rates were rather low. The production of key crops was lagging behind the assignments. Many of the indices fell short of the pre-war level even in 1952 or 1953. In 1953 the sown area was 3.8 million hectares (4 per cent), the gross intake of grain—13 million tons (14 per cent) and the state purchases of grain—5.3 million tons short of the pre-war level. The situation in cattle-breeding remained tense. The number of cattle was 3.5 million short of the pre-war level, and 8.9 million short of the 1928 level.

Collective farmers were very concerned about all the shortcomings. They sent thousands of letters to central Party, government and agricultural organisations, and to the Council for the Affairs of Collective Farms. The authors of those letters suggested many measures for improving the situation in agriculture.

The situation in agriculture was receiving more and more attention from the Party and the government.

THE SEPTEMBER 1953 PLENARY MEETING OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY OF THE SOVIET STATE

In September 1953 the country's attention was focussed on the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee which discussed the vital problem of the country's economic development—the measures for the further development of the agriculture of the USSR. Urgent measures had

to be taken to prevent agriculture from lagging behind industry.

Most portentous were the low yields and the unsatisfactory situation in cattle-breeding.

In analysing the reasons for those shortcomings, the plenary meeting focussed attention on objective factors.

The Soviet state could not develop all branches of the economy simultaneously. Most of the allocations and personnel were assigned to the development of heavy industry—the corner-stone of the country's economy and defence. This was the essence of pre- and post-war policy. In the post-war period huge sums had to be allocated for rehabilitation. This was a heavy burden on the state budget. Investments in agriculture were insufficient to sustain the planned development.

Agricultural development was hampered by the violation of Lenin's principle of material incentives—the vital principal of socialist economy. In practice the per-hectare principle of obligatory deliveries of farm produce by collective farms, fixed by the Party and the Government, was frequently violated. As a rule, the advanced collective farms were given higher delivery assignments than the backward farms. It often happened that district organisations, striving to fulfill the state purchase plans, compelled advanced farms to compensate for what the weaker farms had failed to do.

Sometimes, the low purchasing and delivery prices led to paradoxical situations: the more the collective farms produced, the greater the losses they incurred. Collective farms had to compensate these losses by reducing remuneration to their members and deducting profits from efficient branches.

The plenary meeting also pointed out other reasons for the backwardness of agriculture: inefficient utilisation of machines and tractors in the MTS, mistakes in the placing of executive personnel and in the supervision over collective farms by Party, Soviet and agricultural organisations. Excessive centralised supervision over the economic activities of collective farms was a serious drawback. Frequently their economic activities were impaired by the existing system of planning under which collective farms were issued strict

orders on what and how much to sow and the type and quantity of cattle to be bred.

Of course much depended on the collective farms, and their leadership. It was hard to expect good results if discipline or an honest attitude to collective property were absent. The Party's plenary meeting drew the attention of the whole country to the urgent need to solve the agricultural problem.

To remedy the situation, the Central Committee decided to increase material assistance to collective farms by raising delivery prices, reducing the charges for services rendered by MTS and reducing the prices for manufactured goods required by collective and state farms. The material and technical supply was also to be improved.

Farm machinery factories were given additional allocations and orders. At the same time the plenary meeting insisted on a massive improvement of Party and political work in the countryside and elimination of bureaucratic methods in the management of agriculture; it underlined the need to raise the efficiency of personnel in collective and state farms.

Having outlined the measures for economic assistance to agriculture, the plenary meeting assigned important tasks to collective and state farms for boosting the output of animal produce, vegetables and potatoes.

The key factor was the grain problem. Everything—from meeting the growing needs of the population for food to the development of all sectors of agricultural production—depended on its solution. It was also necessary to replenish yearly the state reserves of grain and accumulate sufficient stocks to increase exports. In 1953 the country produced only 89.6 million tons of grain—clearly insufficient to meet the demand. State purchases amounted to 30.4 million tons, while expenditure and the seed fund reached 32.3 million tons. To compensate for the deficit, the state had to draw from the reserves. This is why urgent measures were needed to boost grain production. First of all it was necessary to intensify agricultural production and raise the yields per hectare. This could be achieved by the rational utilisation of farmlands, improvement of the structure of the sown area and agronomic techniques, and introduction of advanced

scientific methods and experience. This policy had been worked out before the war; the Party's 19th Congress and the Central Committee's plenary meeting in September 1953 re-affirmed it. However, the implementation of this policy required time and large allocations by the state and collective farms; the output of mineral fertilisers and new machinery had to be sharply increased and the training of the personnel substantially improved. At that time at least a third of the collective farms were in need of considerable assistance; they were in no position to invest on their own. It was only natural that under these conditions extraordinary measures had to be taken. The most important among them was the decision to enlarge the sown area and develop new lands.

In February and March 1954 the Central Committee's plenary meeting decided to develop virgin and fallow lands in eastern areas. The decision said in part: "An important and absolutely reliable source for increasing grain production in a short period of time is the expansion of the area under crops by developing fallow and virgin lands in Kazakhstan, Siberia, the Urals, the Volga area and in parts of the North Caucasus". The development of virgin lands became one of the principal weapons in the battle to overcome difficulties in supplying grain; it fully corresponded to the country's economic situation.

The development of large areas of virgin lands in sparsely populated districts, the reorganisation of many economically weak collective farms into state farms, and the assigning of urban workers to the countryside were extraordinary measures designed to give a big boost to the output of farm products. They marked the development of agriculture in the second half of the 1950s.

Collective farmers and state farm and MTS workers showed great interest in the decisions of the Central Committee's plenary meetings. Everyone wanted to make a worthwhile contribution to the general cause.

Industrial enterprises, construction sites, research institutions and organisations believed it their duty to lend their assistance.

Many townsfolk decided to join agricultural production.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL BASIS OF AGRICULTURE

The extraordinary measures brought good results. In 1954 the state allocated 15,400 million rubles, compared with 8,800 million in 1953, for the development of agriculture. In 1954 and 1955, the last two years of the fifth five-year period, the state invested 35,300 million rubles or 41 per cent more than during the fourth five-year period and 23 per cent more than in 1951-1953. Total investments during the fifth five-year period amounted to 64,000 million rubles instead of 52,000 million as originally planned. In the period from 1954 to 1958, i.e., after the September 1953 plenary meeting of the Central Committee, total investments in agriculture amounted to 210,400 million rubles, 102,700 million coming from the state, and 107,700 million from collective farms.

This considerably improved the supply of machinery, mineral fertilisers and building materials to collective and state farms, and the MTS. The Party proclaimed a policy of mechanisation of all agricultural production, including cattle-breeding.

Thousands of tractors, harvesters and lorries were required for implementing such a comprehensive programme. In the period from 1954 to 1958 production of these machines was almost twice that of the previous five years. Some 668,000 tractors, 569,000 lorries, 361,000 grain harvesters and many other machines and implements came into operation in agriculture.

The quality of machines was improved, new machines and implements needed for all-round mechanisation were designed. In 1955 the industry was producing 10 types of tractors, in 1958-1959 it was already producing 18 models, 174 new types of machines were designed in 1950-1952, 201 in 1953-1954, and 266 in 1956-1958. Trailer harvesters were replaced by self-propelled machines.

Mechanisation was replacing manual labour; sowing, row cultivation and harvesting of crops were almost completely mechanised.

In 1958 grain harvesting in collective farms was 88 per cent mechanised (78 per cent in 1953); harvesting of corn was 33 per cent mechanised (in 1953 it was done fully by hand); harvesting of sugar beet was mechanised to a level of more than 50 per cent. Harvesting of cotton and potatoes had a lower level of mechanisation, and mechanisation of cattle-breeding was just in its infancy. In 1958 water supply to dairies was 27 per cent mechanised, and milking only 3.6 per cent mechanised.

Gradually, technical progress in agriculture was reinforced by the electrification of agricultural production. In 1954 collective and state farms, and MTS started to switch in to the state grid system. This was a great step forward in electrification because electricity from the state power grids was nearly 60 per cent cheaper than from village hydro-electric power stations. In the period from 1953 to 1958 nearly 13,000 collective farms received electricity—an average rate of more than 2,000 a year. The number of farms with electricity increased from 22 per cent in 1953 to 49 per cent in 1958. More than half of their electricity supply came from the state grid system.

Power available per agricultural worker went up by more than 150 per cent. In 1950 the power supply per worker in collective and state farms was 1.7 hp; in 1958 it was 4.4 hp; power supply per 100 hectares of sown area in 1950 was 47 hp; in 1958 it was 67 hp.

But in spite of all these accomplishments, there was still a long way to go to all-round mechanisation. Many of the machines had faults, there was sometimes a shortage of reapers, winnowing machines, corn harvesters, etc. Even in grain production it was difficult to introduce all-round mechanisation; in cattle-breeding manual labour remained predominant. Nevertheless it was during this period that prerequisites were set for gradual transition to all-round mechanisation. The blanks in the system of machines for key branches of agriculture were being filled in.

Much attention was given to building work. All the decisions of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers on MTS, state farms and cattle-breeding in collective farms repeatedly urged expansion of building work. The government allocated large amounts of building

materials, many thousands of standard silo-towers and houses. MTS built hundreds of workshops, garages and sheds every year. Building work conducted on such a broad scale, collective farms were always short of materials and builders.

INCENTIVES FOR FARMERS

The Party believed that material incentives for collective farms and farmers were essential for raising agricultural production.

Immediately after the September 1953 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee additional allocations were made for raising purchasing and delivery prices. Prices for cattle and poultry, subject to obligatory deliveries, were raised by 450 per cent; for vegetables by 25 to 40 per cent, for milk and butter by 100 per cent, and for potatoes by 150 per cent. Purchasing prices for meat went up by an average of 30 per cent, and those of milk by 50 per cent.

All debts incurred by collective farms in the obligatory deliveries of animal produce, potatoes and vegetables were written off. The quotas of obligatory deliveries from family farmsteads were reduced, agricultural taxes were lowered, and all tax arrears wiped out. Collective farms and farmers were given the opportunity of selling more commercial products to the state at higher prices. This increased their incomes in 1953 by more than 13,000 million rubles. In the period from 1955 to 1958 the purchasing prices for potatoes and vegetables, sheep wool, hemp seed and certain other products continued to rise. On the whole, delivery and purchasing prices in the period from 1952 to 1958 were nearly trebled.

As a result, the incomes of collective farms in 1954 and 1955 went up by 20,000 million rubles; the income of each household increased from 2,518 rubles in 1953 to 7,015 rubles in 1958.

AGRICULTURAL PERSONNEL

Neither high labour remuneration and incomes nor abundance of machines could solve the problem fully. Specialists and managers were also needed.

Priority was given to the provision of mechanics and engineers to the MTS. Drivers of tractors and harvesters, tractor team leaders and their assistants, and fuel-pump operators were placed on the staffs of MTS. Previously the machinery had been operated by seasonal workers from collective farms. By January 1955 nearly 2 million people had been placed on the staff lists of the MTS.

The training of machine operators was stepped up. The schools and courses organised by the Ministry of Agriculture were turning out more than 500,000 machine operators every year. During the period from 1952 to 1962 more than 4,077,000 tractor drivers and 657,000 harvester drivers and their assistants completed courses at vocational schools.

Great assistance was rendered by industrial and urban centres. The Party appealed to the working class to send qualified industrial workers for regular work in agriculture. The appeal was unanimously supported by workers and office employees. From September 1953 to the spring of 1954 more than 50,000 machine operators came from industrial centres to work in the MTS. Early in 1959 there were 2,401,000 tractor drivers, tractor team leaders and their assistants, harvester and lorry drivers. However, the shortage was not entirely eliminated.

Urban and industrial centres also sent many engineers, technicians and production managers. More than 19,000 urban engineers and technicians were working in the MTS on March 1, 1954 (nearly 60 per cent of the MTS managers and 84.2 per cent of chief engineers had a higher education). Another 29,000 engineers and technicians arrived at the beginning of 1956.

Towns also supported the appeal made by the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers on March 25, 1955 to help the backward collective farms with executives. Just as they had 25 years before, the best representatives of the working class and urban intelligentsia

went to work in the countryside. More than 100,000 applications were filed by the end of 1955. The first to volunteer were Communists. They regarded the work in villages as a responsible assignment, as their civic duty. By the end of 1956 some 32,000 people from towns had gone to work in collective farms.

More than 90 per cent of the new arrivals were Communists or CPSU probation members, and 2 to 4 per cent Komsomol members. Half of them had higher or secondary education. For many it was not an easy matter to quit comfortable urban homes and familiar jobs and agree to go and help improve the efficiency of backward farms, but they were all guided by a feeling of responsibility to the Party.

Most of them displayed organisational ability, initiative, discipline and resoluteness. They had to devise their own methods of efficient work: they had inadequate knowledge of agriculture and no experience in organising collective farm production, but they all adopted a creative attitude in tackling agricultural problems.

The collective farms which they headed improved their economies, increased labour and political activity, and improved living standards.

Many of the volunteers decided to stay on collective farms, and even today they set examples of selfless work.

Agricultural educational establishments intensified the training of specialists. In the period from 1951 to 1958 they released a total of more than 650,000 specialists with higher or intermediate qualifications; institutes and specialised secondary schools prepared 185,000 agronomists, 77,400 zootechnicians, 59,900 veterinaries, and 95,800 engineers and technicians.

The system of distribution of specialists was reviewed. The system which had existed until the autumn of 1953 and under which specialists were assigned to individual sectors did not satisfy the needs of large farms for agronomists and zootechnicians. After the September 1953 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee agronomists and zootechnicians were placed on the staffs of MTS. Subsequently they were reassigned to collective farms, where most of them became members.

So the number of organisers and specialists in the countryside increased from 114,000 in 1953 to 371,000 in 1957. In April 1958, 92.6 per cent of collective farm chairmen were Communists, nearly 40 per cent of them had higher or specialised secondary education.

A new type of organiser and specialist, a new leader of the masses, emerged.

RECIPROCITY FOR STATE ASSISTANCE

The new circumstances immediately had an impact on labour resources in collective and state farms. For the first time in many years the migration of peasants was retarded and the rural population began to grow. In the period from 1950 to 1953 the number of workers in MTS and collective farms fell from 28.3 to 26.8 million, but in the period from 1953 to 1956 it rose to 28.6 million.

Village school-leavers began to join agricultural production, Komsomol members took up the most laborious tasks, particularly in livestock-breeding. In 1954 Komsomol members in the village of Zakharovo, Ryazan Region, unanimously decided to go and work on the cattle farm. This triggered off a mass youth movement for taking jobs in livestock-breeding. At the end of 1959 some 1.2 million young men and women went to work in more than 40,000 livestock farms.

Material incentives encouraged initiative; the state allowed collective farms to handle many economic matters on their own. On March 9, 1955, a decision of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers introduced a new system of planning in agriculture. Excessive centralisation, which obstructed initiative, was abolished. Henceforth state agencies planned only the quantity of commercial products, while collective farms themselves decided how to produce them. The farms were allowed to decide what size of area was to be sown to different crops, and the number and type of cattle to be produced. The plans were discussed and approved at general meetings of collective farmers.

It was not easy to apply the new principles in practice. However, the peasants saw that the situation was improving. They felt that the Party and the whole people were interested in developing agricultural production. So their belief in collective farms became stronger, they began to realise their duty to the collective farm. This was sign of great changes for the good in the future.

On March 6, 1956, the CPSU and the Council of Ministers adopted a resolution on the Rules of the agricultural artel and encouragement of the initiative of collective farmers in the organisation of collective farm production and the management of the artel's affairs. The Rules adopted more than 20 years before no longer covered all the versatile activities of collective farms, and therefore it was decided to allow general meetings of farmers to amend or supplement certain provisions with due regard for local conditions and requirements.

The role of Party organisations in collective farms and MTS increased and the placement of Communists in production was improved. All this gave village Party organisations a fighting spirit and made their work more creative.

The arrival of many Communist specialists immediately raised the level of political and organisational work. Thousands of Communists from towns brought with them experience in large industrial enterprises, construction sites and urban organisations. Party organisations in collective farms assumed control over key sectors of production and they headed the general movement for boosting agricultural production.

The organising role of village Party organisations was increased after the Party's 20th Congress. By the end of 1958 they numbered more than 1,350,000 Communists—an average of 20 Communists per organisation.

Komsomol members took a more energetic part in boosting production. In 1958 there were 3 million of them in the countryside—a large and reliable force. Many of them became expert crop producers and cattle-breeders.

Labour activity of collective farmers was intensified. The average annual earnings of work-day unit per farmer increased from 295 in 1953 to 335 in 1957.

People became more interested in new and progressive methods which were introduced in all processes, from cultivation and to harvesting. In those years T. S. Maltsev, director of the Shadrinsk experimental station in Kurgan Region, introduced his famous system of cultivation: deep ploughing without mould-boards and square-pocket sowing of potatoes were introduced.

The new methods helped save labour. In the spring of 1956 the machine operators N. F. Manukovsky and I. V. Lukin started to cultivate corn without resort to manual labour. Their initiative quickly spread to other parts of the country. In 1958 there were already 26,000 mechanised corn-cultivating units.

Socialist emulation promoted the spread of progressive methods of work. In 1953-1958 it acquired qualitatively new features; the results were summed up more scrupulously. People began to think and appraise the available opportunities in a businesslike manner; the obligations they assumed covered gross output, production costs, profitability, efficient utilisation of land and cultivation of profitable crops.

The countryside responded to the convocation of the Party's 20th Congress with a new wave of labour enthusiasm. Collective farmers in Voronezh Region launched a country-wide drive to boost the output of animal produce. They more than fulfilled their socialist obligations. On December 17, 1956, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet awarded the Order of Lenin to Voronezh Region for its accomplishments; orders and medals were awarded to 2,132 workers of collective farms, MTS, state farms, Party and Soviet organisations.

G. N. Bukhanko's tractor team from Zemlyanukhinsky MTS, Altai Territory, initiated socialist emulation for bumper harvests, daily overfulfilment of quotas by all tractor drivers, machine operators and harvester drivers and for the title "team of master-cultivators".

N. F. Manukovsky and A. V. Gitalov initiated a movement for all-round mechanisation of corn cultivation.

In Uzbekistan, farmers started a movement for the all-round mechanisation of cotton cultivation. Striking successes were achieved by Tursunoi Akhunova, a cotton harvester

driver in the Kirov Collective Farm, Tashkent Region. After completing a course at a machine operators' school in 1955 she started work as a tractor driver and planted cotton; when harvesting began, she drove a cotton harvester which did the work of a hundred people. She harvested more than 200 tons of cotton in a season. For this Akhunova was given the title of Hero of Socialist Labour. Akhunova helped other women improve their results.

Advanced farmers shared their knowledge and experience with others. Schools of advanced methods were set up. In the Central black-earth zone there were more than 400 schools teaching advanced methods; 13 of them were republican, and 24 regional. The student body totalled nearly 15,000. The most popular of the schools was the republican school which was set up to teach the methods used by the team headed by N. F. Manukovsky. In the period from 1956 to 1963 Manukovsky's team was visited by nearly 15,000 people from all parts of the Soviet Union.

The results of socialist emulation were improving. Hundreds of farms and whole regions came to the fore. In 1957 a big group of agricultural workers were awarded orders and medals, 10 regions in the Ukraine were awarded the Order of Lenin, 233 people won the title Hero of Socialist Labour, 23 of them for the second time; more than 44,000 farmers, both men and women, were awarded the orders and medals of the USSR.

VIRGIN LANDS

The development of the virgin lands was one of the most heroic pages in the history of Soviet agriculture and collective farms. The development of virgin lands was started in the spring of 1954. The Party's appeal met with a big response, hundreds of thousands of people from towns and settlements deciding to go to the virgin lands. In 1954 and 1955 more than 1.6 million young men and women volunteered.

Whole collectives went to the east. On February 22, 1954, a send-off party was arranged in the Kremlin for the first group of volunteers.

The mass migration to the east greatly replenished the labour resources of collective and state farms in the virgin lands. By the autumn of 1954 some 2,300 families from the Ukraine and Byelorussia had moved to Altai Territory; in 1954 and 1955, 21,379 families came to Kazakhstan. In the period from 1953 to 1958 the population of Kazakhstan increased by 24 per cent; in the virgin-land regions of Akmo-linsk, Kokchetav, Kustanai and Pavlodar it increased by 40 to 50 per cent.

During harvesting, the labour force was supplemented by soldiers and students. In 1956 some 118,000 students worked in the fields of Kazakhstan, in 1957 there were 125,000 of them, and in 1958—160,000. Youth teams arrived from Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Poland, Hungary, and the Chinese People's Republic. In response to the Party's appeal at least 3 million students, workers and office employees worked in the virgin lands in 1956-1958.

Farm mechanics schools were an important source of industrial manpower. In the period from 1954 to 1957 they prepared more than 170,000 machine operators for the virgin lands.

There was also a great need for organisers, agricultural specialists and administrators. These were provided by state farms, ministries, industrial enterprises, and Party and Soviet organisations.

A strong material and technical basis was created in the virgin lands. The supply of tractors, harvesters and other machines was uninterrupted. In 1954 and 1955 the virgin lands received more than 200,000 tractors (in 15 hp units)—nearly a third of the total supply to agriculture (the virgin lands covered not more than 20 per cent of the sown area in the country). In Kazakhstan, the number of tractors in 1954-1958 was more than trebled, and the number of harvesters was increased by 250 per cent. Nevertheless there was still a shortage of them.

A great contribution to the increased production of grain was made by the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan became a major grain-producing region. The

republic developed more than 25 million hectares of virgin lands in 1954-1960. In 1956 the collective farms and state farms there delivered 16,005,440 tons of grain—more than in the preceding 11 years put together. This success was achieved thanks to the assistance of all the Union republics which proved in practice the inviolable friendship of the peoples of the USSR and the Leninist principle of labour solidarity.

Most of the credit for the development of virgin and fallow lands is usually attributed to the state farms, and it is often said that the collective farms played a secondary role. Yet in actual fact this was not so. Of the 35.9 million hectares of virgin and fallow lands which were developed in 1954-1956, the state farms accounted for 14.3 million (40 per cent), while collective farms developed 21.6 million (60 per cent). In Kazakhstan, it is true, the leading role was played by state farms. In 1958 they had 62 per cent of the sown area and they produced more than 60 per cent of commercial grain. The collective farms in the republic also improved their economies—in 1958 their cash incomes were more than trebled compared with 1953.

Tremendous will-power and efforts were required to develop the virgin lands. The trials were severe; there were no roads or dwellings in remote areas. Yet the people worked diligently and conquered one hectare of land after another. They ate in the fields, and sometimes, during harvesting, they slept no more than three hours a day. Soon major socialist enterprises, workers' settlements, electric power stations, schools, hospitals, clubs and railways covered the former wasteland.

The country highly assessed the feats of the pioneers. In 1956 it awarded the Order of Lenin to Komsomol, to Kazakhstan, Altai and Krasnoyarsk territories, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Chelyabinsk, Orenburg and Saratov regions. More than 100,000 people received medals and orders, and 262 people became Heroes of Socialist Labour. A medal "For the Conquest of Virgin Lands" was instituted.

The conquest of the virgin lands greatly boosted the production and state purchases of grain. In 1956 to 1958 more than half of the grain was purchased there.

GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

In 1953-1958 there was a noticeable rise in the production of crops and animal products. The sown area was increased, and yields were higher. The sown area increased from 157.2 million hectares in 1953 to 195.6 million in 1958; the area sown to grain crops was increased from 106.7 million to 125.2 million hectares; the yields increased from 0.78 to 1.13 tons per hectare. The average annual yields in 1954-1958 rose to 0.92 tons per hectare compared with 0.77 tons in 1949-1953. Gross annual production went up from 76.8 million to 110.4 million tons.

The development of vast areas of virgin and fallow lands considerably increased the output of commercial grain in a short period of time. The share of virgin lands in the total production of grain went up from 33 per cent in 1950-1953 to 43-47 per cent in 1958-1960, and in state purchases, from 35 to 58-62 per cent.

At the end of the 1950s more than half of the state purchases of grain were made in the virgin lands. The extraordinary measures which were taken in 1954-1958 increased the general volume of agricultural production, but did not ensure the required stable growth of agriculture. Agriculture had to be intensified all over the country.

It would be wrong to assume that at that time Soviet agriculture was developing extensively. According to Soviet economists, the growth in gross agricultural output even at the height of the development of virgin lands was mainly due to higher yields and productivity of animal-breeding.

Much attention was paid to the intensification of agricultural production. More fertilisers and herbicides were applied and new agronomic techniques used.

Animal-breeding was also making good progress. The cattle population was increased in 1959 by 25 per cent (cows—by 37 per cent) compared with 1953, pigs by 71 per cent, and sheep by 37.5 per cent. In 1959 collective and state farms had a total of 14.4 million cows; the yields of milk per cow went up from 1,157 kg in 1953 to 2,067 kg in 1959. The production of meat and lard rose from 4.9 million tons

in 1949-1953 (annual average) to 6.9 million tons in 1954-1958; that of milk from 35.7 to 48.7 million tons.

At the end of the 1950s animal-breeding became extremely important in meeting the demand for animal produce. The share of commercial animal products of collective and state farms and other state agricultural enterprises in the total commercial output of animal produce went up from 55 per cent in 1950 to 77 per cent in 1958; that of meat from 53 to 73 per cent; that of milk from 51 to 84 per cent; of eggs from 26 to 39 per cent; and of wool from 84 to 89 per cent. After the reduction of obligatory deliveries from individual farmsteads of peasants, workers and office employees (the decision was taken in 1953), their share in state purchases considerably decreased. In 1952 the share of meat deliveries by this category of farmsteads stood at 23 per cent, while in 1957 it dropped to 10.2 per cent, the share of milk dropped from 31 to 7.1 per cent. Since production in collective and state farms was increasing and so were purchases of farm produce, the Party's Central Committee abolished obligatory deliveries of products from the private farmsteads of peasants, workers and office employees as from January 1, 1958.

The sown area and the harvests of cotton, sugar beet, sunflower and hemp were increased. Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenia scored successes in the production of cotton. In 1954-1958 Uzbekistan delivered 13.7 million tons of cotton to the state as compared with 11 million tons in the preceding five years; Tajikistan brought in record harvests of cotton—2.7 tons per hectare.

Gross agricultural output increased by 50 per cent, and so the state considerably raised the purchases of the basic farm products. Grain purchases went up from 32 million tons in 1949-1953 to 43.2 million tons in 1954-1958 (annual average); purchases of cattle and poultry (in live weight) rose from 2.7 to 4.7 million tons, and of milk and dairy products from 9.2 to 16.9 million tons.

A typical feature of agricultural development in the period was the growing role of state farms. Their sown area was increased from 15.2 million hectares in 1953 to 52.5 million in 1958—26.8 per cent of the total sown area in the country. This was brought about by the organisation

of new state farms in the virgin lands and the reorganisation of weak collective farms into state farms.

In the 1950s the state farms became major agricultural producers. The share of state farms and other state enterprises in the commercial output of agricultural products went up from 14 per cent in 1950 to 22 per cent in 1958, in the commercial production of grain—from 11 to 37 per cent, meat—from 20 to 26 per cent, milk—from 15 to 22 per cent, eggs—from 7 to 16 per cent, and wool—from 15 to 28 per cent.

However, collective farms continued to be the main producers. In 1958 they accounted for 63 per cent of commercial grain, 87 per cent of cotton, 96 per cent of sugar beet, 55 per cent of vegetables, 47 per cent of meat, 63 per cent of milk and 62 per cent of wool.

The successful development of agriculture was a primary prerequisite for the entry of Soviet society into the stage of developed socialism; it consolidated the society's political and economic foundation, and raised living standards.

RISE IN THE PEASANTS' LIVING STANDARDS

The material position of collective farmers greatly changed in the 1950s. The September 1953 plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee drew particular attention to the need to raise the material interest of collective farms and peasants in the development of collective production.

Having analysed the system of remuneration in advanced farms, the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted in March 1956 a decision on monthly advance payments to collective farmers and additional pay in collective farms which recommended collective farms to advance, in conformity with the decisions of general meetings, at least 25 per cent of cash incomes to the farmers and 50 per cent of the cash derived as advance payments for contracts, sales and obligatory deliveries of farm products. To provide for the monthly advance payments, collective farms began to set up cash and food funds. In 1956 advance pay-

ments were paid by 40 per cent of the collective farms, and quarterly advance payments by nearly 30 per cent.

In 1957 advanced farms began to adopt a system of guaranteed remuneration in cash.

The collective economy was becoming the main source of growth of farmers' living standards. Farmers' cash incomes went up from 42,800 million rubles in 1952 to 95,200 million in 1957, and the total incomes in cash and kind from work at collective farms went up from 47,500 million to 83,800 million rubles (in comparable prices). The per capita incomes in cash and kind from collective and private farming went up by more than 40 per cent between 1953 and 1958.

The share of incomes from collective work in family budgets in the RSFSR went up from 33.4 per cent in 1953 to 41.3 per cent in 1958 and 42.7 per cent in 1963. In addition, 12.2 per cent of the budget was replenished from incomes received from state and co-operative organisations. On the whole, farmers derived 54.9 per cent of their incomes from collective farm and state sectors of production. The remainder came from family farmsteads. They were becoming less important but still continued to be a major source of income. Even in advanced farms family farmsteads supplied the peasants with meat, milk, eggs, potatoes and vegetables.

There was a considerable change in the ratio between incomes in cash and kind. Remuneration in kind predominated until 1953, but subsequently cash payments came to the fore. In 1957 cash payment for collective labour amounted to 52 per cent. The amount and form of remuneration to collective farmers began to acquire the character of remuneration in state farms. In 1957 the pay for the work-day in the collective farms reached 75 per cent of the pay in state farms.

The growth in incomes changed the pattern of consumption. Peasants began to eat and dress better; the per capita consumption of high-calorie food increased. In 1958 the per capita consumption of meat and lard went up by 90 per cent compared with 1940; that of fish and fish products by nearly 200 per cent; milk and dairy products by 60 per cent; sugar by 480 per cent; and confectionary by more than 200 per cent.

It should be stressed that the growth of living standards of peasants was closely connected with the rising living standards of the whole Soviet people. Even a simple comparison of the per capita consumption of essential products at the beginning and end of the 1950s reveals that vast improvements were taking place. The per capita consumption of meat and meat products went up from 26 kg in 1950 to 40 kg in 1960 (i.e., by more than 50 per cent); that of milk—from 172 to 240 kg (40 per cent); consumption of eggs doubled; that of sugar went up from 11.6 kg to 28 kg (140 per cent). At the same time the consumption of potatoes dropped from 241 kg to 143 kg, and that of flour products—from 172 kg to 164 kg (cf. 200 kg in 1913). The growing consumption of high-calorie food was made possible by the increased output of farm products from collective and state farms, higher purchasing power and better living standards as a whole.

The successes of agriculture in the 1950s and the efficiency of social production laid a foundation for the gradual levelling-out of the differences between urban and rural living standards. In the period from 1950 to 1957 the consumption of sugar went up by 65 per cent in towns and by 100 per cent in the country; the consumption of woollens rose by 15 and 71 per cent, respectively; that of silk fabrics by 310 and 580 per cent, respectively; footwear by 80 and 110 per cent, respectively. In towns there was practically no increase in the consumption of cotton fabrics, while the consumption of rubber shoes even dropped; in the countryside the consumption of cotton fabrics increased by 42 per cent, and of rubber shoes, by 100 per cent.

This tendency was seen all over the country.

The cultural and every-day requirements were also changing. Growing incomes enabled collective farms to modernise villages. In the period from 1954 to 1958 collective farms helped their members to build 3.3 million houses. New kindergartens and nurseries, schools, hospitals, canteens and cultural centres appeared in thousands of collective farms.

COLLECTIVE FARMS TODAY

I. UPSURGE OF COLLECTIVE FARM PRODUCTION—AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR THE TRANSITION TO COMMUNISM

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL BASIS OF COLLECTIVE FARM PRODUCTION

In October 1961 the 22nd Party Congress adopted the new Programme which mapped out the road for the country's transition to communism. The Programme clearly determined the tasks for the countryside at that particular stage. Among the most important and urgent tasks were the mechanisation of agriculture, introduction of scientific methods of cultivation and stock-breeding, and scientific organisation of labour.

The closure of MTS and the transfer of their machines to collective farms was an important development. The reorganised system of production and technical services consolidated the collective farm system of socialist agriculture and opened up new production and social opportunities. It gave rise to social and economic changes in the countryside. The reorganised system became an important landmark in the development of the collective farm system.

The MTS made a great historic contribution to the formation and consolidation of the collective farm system, to the technical provisioning of agriculture and consolidation of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry at all stages in the construction of socialism.

By the end of the 1950s, however, they had outlived their usefulness. When there was a shortage of machinery and qualified personnel, the MTS acted as technical centres and as organisers of collective farm production. But now the collective farms had accumulated experience in large-

scale production. They had become stronger organisationally and economically, and their own machinery pools had expanded. In 1958 they owned half of the 660,000 lorries employed in agriculture. Their aggregate machine pool was estimated to be worth 24,000 million rubles in post-1961 prices. Many farms had their own power stations and auxiliary enterprises equipped with modern machines.

There were many qualified agronomists, livestock experts, machine operators, and collective farm production managers. At the beginning of 1958 there were 150,000 specialists with higher or specialised secondary education—eight times the figure in 1953. In the circumstances, the services rendered by the MTS were no longer appropriate for the development of the productive forces in agriculture.

In fact, the MTS system in many cases even obstructed the further development of advanced farms, it restricted the initiative of farmers in the utilisation of production reserves. The collective farm and the MTS had two management apparatus, and that raised production costs.

New forms of rendering production and technical services to collective farms had to be devised. Their relations with the MTS had to be revised. In districts where an MTS served just one farm it was decided to appoint only one head man—the chairman of the collective farm or the director of the MTS. If a collective farm was served by one tractor team, it was reorganised into a complex tractor-crop cultivation team headed by a collective farmer.

After a careful analysis of the special trends in the development of the collective farm system at this particular stage and the initiative of collective farms in the quest for new forms of relations with MTS, the February 1958 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee came to the conclusion that the MTS had fulfilled their mission; it was decided to reorganise them into technical repair stations (TRS) and to transfer their machines to collective farms. In the case of weak collective farms, which were not in a position to acquire and run the machines, the old system of MTS services was to be retained for a time.

The implementation of this decision was preceded by widespread discussions in collective farms, MTS, state farms, industrial enterprises and construction sites, research

and educational establishments, military units and institutions, and in the press.

The discussions revealed that the decision was timely. On March 31, 1958, the USSR Supreme Soviet passed a law on the reorganisation of MTS which envisaged the sale of machines to collective farms over a period of several years. By October 1, 1958, some 60 per cent of collective farms in the Russian Federation, 72 per cent in West Siberia, 56 per cent in East Siberia, and 60 per cent in Kazakhstan purchased the machines. The stronger collective farms paid the full prices for the machines in 1958.

The Soviet state gave considerable assistance to the collective farms. The machines were sold for cash or on credit. On July 1, 1958, collective farms in Kazakhstan had paid in cash only 49 million rubles of the 705 million rubles' worth of machines they had acquired.

Weak collective farms were given additional aid. On the recommendation of the June 1958 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee it was decided to cancel all their arrears in the obligatory delivery of farm products, contract deliveries and remuneration for services rendered by MTS and specialised stations. That helped them pass over to the new forms of production and technical services, and improve their economic position.

By January 1, 1960, the sale of machinery was in the main completed. The state sold 660,000 tractors, nearly 300,000 harvesters and many other machines.

The collective farms made better use of the machinery than the MTS. They began to develop new forms of progressive organisation of labour—groups and teams of complex mechanisation.

The strongest MTS were reorganised into TRS for repairing farm machines, selling new machinery, spares and mineral fertilisers, leasing machines, and rendering certain services to collective farms (for example, assembly of livestock farm equipment). A new organisation—the Soyuzselkhoztekhnika, which incorporated the TRS—was set up in 1961. This measure improved supply and repair services.

The repair facilities were being constantly extended. Repair enterprises became more specialised, and new factories and shops were built.

Technical progress in agriculture and the industrialisation of farm work and production is impossible without the provision of modern machines to collective farms and without all-round mechanisation and electrification of production processes.

In March and April 1966 the Party's 23rd Congress drew up a broad programme for technical progress in agriculture. The targets for economic development in the period 1966-1970 envisaged a sharp increase of capital investments in agriculture and those branches of industry and transport which catered for it. During that five-year period capital investments by the state and collective farms amounted to 74,369 million rubles compared with 45,625 million in the preceding five years. The state's allocations amounted to 45,113 million compared with only 26,858 million rubles in the previous five years. Taking all expenses into account (construction of repair enterprises, development of the building industry in collective farms and inter-farm organisations, etc.), the capital investments in 1966-1970 are estimated at 82,200 million rubles.

The large capital investments created the right conditions for accelerating the growth rates of the material and technical basis of socialist agriculture. During the eighth five-year period (1966-1970) the production of plough tractors was increased by 44.7 per cent; that of agricultural machines by 44.3 per cent and of animal-breeding machinery by 120 per cent; machines used for the application of mineral and organic fertilisers experienced a 240 per cent increase in production; machines for developing boggy, salty and rocky soil a 100 per cent increase; production of anti-erosion machines went up by 300 per cent. Factories began to manufacture 335 new types of efficient machines, and 100 types of machines and equipment for animal-breeding farms. More than 700 million rubles were saved by using the new machinery and nearly 2,000 million rubles from the exploitation of new types of tractors. In 1965 the power available per worker in the collective farms stood at 5.7 hp, in 1970 it was 8.7 hp (the aggregate power available per worker in collective and state farms went up from 7.7 to 11.2 hp). In 1970 collective farms had an average of 60 tractors (in 15 hp units) against 38 in 1965. The principal

field work (ploughing, sowing and harvesting of grain, cotton and sugar beet) in both collective and state farms was fully mechanised; mechanisation of potato sowing, row cultivation of sugar beet, vegetables and cotton was nearing completion.

The mechanisation of animal-breeding, and the all-round mechanisation and automation of agricultural production require a comprehensive power supply. In 1970 some 99 per cent of collective farms employed electricity for production purposes (against 92 per cent in 1965 and 68 per cent in 1960). The consumption of electric power was doubling every five years—2,200 million kwh in 1960, 4,400 million in 1965 and nearly 9,000 million in 1970.

Another important development was the growing application of chemicals. The deliveries of mineral fertilisers increased from 27,066,000 tons in 1965 to 45,649,000 tons in 1970. The supply of mineral fertilisers per hectare increased from 122.5 kg (in conventional units) to 207.1 kg.

LAND RECLAMATION

Land reclamation became a major factor in the intensification of agriculture. The May 1966 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee drew up a far-reaching programme for land reclamation. It envisaged a complex of various measures—irrigation, drainage, liming of acidic soil, spreading of gypsum on alkaline soil, weeding, enlargement of cultivated lots, forest- and water-protection belts and other measures against water and wind erosion. The programme covers a number of years and requires vast investments and material funds.

The trends in the land reclamation have been determined, and research work completed. Large building organisations have been set up, and a production base created to carry out vast amounts of work and ensure that the necessary standards are maintained.

Of particular importance is the decision of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers "On

Covering the Expense for the Radical Improvement of Land in Collective Farms by the State Budget". This gave an opportunity to exploit vast tracts of underdeveloped lands in the non-black-earth region and to expand irrigation farming.

In 1966-1970 the area of reclaimed lands was increased from 15.6 million to 21.3 million hectares; in addition, 33.8 million hectares of pastures were irrigated. The production of grain, particularly of rice, cotton, vegetables and fodder was considerably increased on reclaimed lands. In arid zones, where work had been started on the creation of major districts of stable production, the gross output of grain increased by 120 per cent over the five-year period.

In 1970 the yields of grain on irrigated lands amounted to 2.21 tons per hectare (1.38 tons in 1965); in the regions producing commercial grain the yields were 3.2 tons, and in the south of the Ukraine—4.22 tons. Drainage in regions with excessive humidity also produces good results. In 1970 the yields of grain in Lithuania reached 2.45 tons per hectare; that was because the republic succeeded in reclaiming 0.8 million hectares of the total of 2.4 million hectares of ploughland.

The improvement of the irrigation system in the republics of Central Asia boosted the production of cotton and rice. Thanks to this the Hunger Steppes sold more than 200,000 tons of cotton to the state in 1970. The irrigation of the land around the Kara Kum Canal helped to increase the production of cotton in Turkmenia; 80 per cent of the increase in rice production came from the newly irrigated lands.

The scale of land reclamation is still on the increase.

THE NEW COURSE OF THE ECONOMIC POLICY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The slow rate of agricultural production in 1959-1964, particularly in 1963, is explained by unfavourable weather conditions in certain parts of the country and by certain

deviations from the economic policy in the countryside and mistakes in management. These consisted of: a decrease in the share of capital investments; reduction of the supply of tractors and other farm machines; a sharp increase in the area under labour-consuming crops, such as corn and sugar beet; unfounded revision of the structure of sown area; the waning interest of farmers in their work, artificial limitation of the development of family animal-breeding, etc. Purchasing prices were often not high enough to cover production costs; collective and state farms suffered losses—they had no opportunity to ensure expanded reproduction in a planned manner. Agriculture was assigned important tasks, but it was not provided with the necessary capital investments and technical means. Stereotyped instructions from above on cultivation, structures of sown areas, keeping and feeding of livestock were a nuisance; the practice of administrative coercion in managing collective and state farms was not eliminated.

So practically all sectors of agricultural production were lagging; while the number of pigs, sheep and poultry decreased.

Agricultural policy was radically reviewed by the plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee held in October 1964 and March 1965 and by the Party's 23rd Congress.

The March 1965 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee pointed out that the effective utilisation of the advantages of large-scale socialist agricultural production should be based on scientific methods of management, strict observance of the economic laws of socialist economy, further improvement of the methods of management, application of Lenin's principles of material incentives and correct combination of the public and personal interests of production collectives and each employee.

The basis of the Party's economic policy in the countryside was the new system of purchases. Equitable conditions for the marketing of farm produce are conducive to the development of agriculture on the basis of additional incentives and better management. This is why the question of purchases became the crux of economic policy in the countryside.

Fixed purchase plans for a number of years in succession were established after the March 1965 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. Each collective farm was given a state order for products covering the period until 1970. This principle was retained for the new five-year plan covering the period from 1971 to 1975.

The new system was based on the objective assessment of the production opportunities in the collective farms; so the purchases of grain in 1965-1970 were fixed below the previous level (54.4 million tons instead of 64 million tons). It was decided to allow collective farms to sell, on a strictly voluntary basis, the excess of commercial grain at prices 50 per cent higher than the general level.

In October 1968 the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee recognised the efficiency of above-plan purchases of agricultural products and found it expedient to spread the system to other farm products, particularly to animal products.

The scientifically based system of prices for agricultural products stimulates the development of collective farm production and labour productivity; it reduces production costs and provides all collective farms with equal economic opportunities for raising material and cultural standards.

On the suggestion of the March 1965 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, all Union republics substantially raised the basic purchasing prices of meat and of wheat, rye, buck-wheat, common millet, rice and certain other types of grain. The purchasing prices of wheat and rye were raised by 11 to 53 per cent, depending on the zone; of cattle by 20 to 55 per cent; of pigs by 30 to 70 per cent; of sheep by 10 to 70 per cent; and of milk by 10 to 40 per cent.

Incentive prices encouraged collective farmers to look for ways of increasing production and sale of commercial farm produce to the state over and above the plan. In 1965 the incomes of collective farms exceeded the level of the previous year by more than 2,500 million rubles. The new system of purchases helped to overcome the shortcomings in planning production in collective farms, and it laid down the most favourable conditions for combining the interests of the state and collective farms.

It was decided to place greater emphasis on the role of state credits in the development of collective farm production and to provide credits to collective farms directly from banks. The revised system of deducting income taxes from collective farms is of great significance. The taxes were lowered by approximately half. All these measures created unprecedented conditions for raising the profitability of collective farm production.

The new principles of planning and economic incentives are based on Lenin's ideas on co-operation and the socialist economy, the economic regulation of the relations between the state and farms and between the farms and the direct producers—collective farmers and workers on state farms. The social and economic content of the change in agricultural policy, which was undertaken on the decisions of the March 1965 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and the Party's 23rd Congress, was not limited to a change in a few principles and methods of management and planning: it was accompanied by a definite redistribution of the national income in favour of agriculture. In the final analysis, this was the real essence of the measures which the Party took to consolidate the alliance of the working class and the collective farm peasantry at that particular stage; it was on this that the major changes in agricultural production were based.

The new system of purchases, which meant a fundamentally new solution to the problems of planning and material incentives, the consolidation and development of the material and technical basis of collective and state farms, the introduction of scientific achievements and large-scale land reclamation work—all these were aimed at intensifying agricultural production.

An analysis of the decisions of the plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee in 1965-1970 and of the decisions of the Party's 23rd and 24th congresses reveals that the Party has adopted an entirely new approach to the problems of agricultural development. Its most salient feature is that the Party attaches equal importance to agricultural development and to the development of all the other sectors of the economy, including heavy industry.

IMPROVEMENT OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITHIN
COLLECTIVE FARMS

The economic reform also covers the system of relations within collective farms.

Great changes in collective farm life were brought about by the decision on raising the material interest of collective farmers in the development of social production which the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted on May 16, 1966. The major obstacles in this respect had been the so-called residual principle of forming the wage fund and irregular pay to collective farmers. In 1964, for instance, a quarter of the collective farms paid advance sums to their members less than six times a year.

The decision of the CPSU Central Committee and the Council of Ministers recommended to collective farms to introduce as from July 1, 1966, guaranteed remuneration of labour in cash (at least once a month) and kind (in line with production). The creation of the wage fund was to be given priority, and it was not to be used for any other purpose. If a collective farm had not sufficient means for providing guaranteed remuneration, the State Bank was to extend credits in 1966-1970 for a period of five years within the limits envisaged in the long-term credit plans for collective farms.

Collective farmers enthusiastically supported the decision. They discussed it at general meetings and warmly approved it. All collective farms drew up and approved at general meetings the principles of remunerating the work of collective farmers; they revised work quotas, took steps to reduce unproductive expenses and production costs. By the end of 1969 more than 95 per cent of collective farms, some of them with state credit, enforced the guaranteed remuneration of labour.

The revision of the practice of forming social funds enabled the collective farms to discard the work-day unit as a special form of calculating labour expenditure and its remuneration. That became possible thanks to the direct rating of labour expenses (on the basis of the existing norms in state farms) and remuneration at tariff rates (direct cash

rates). The replacement of work-day units by cash payments is of great significance for the enforcement of equal pay for equal work in collective farms, promotion of material interests of farmers in the results of their work, growth of labour activity, and the constant implementation of the principles of cost-accounting.

It was also recommended to collective farms to introduce remuneration for the final results of work (for the quality and quantity of products or for the gross income). The additional pay stimulates labour productivity because it encourages farmers to achieve better results, above-plan production and better quality. Farmers were also encouraged to produce rice, buck-wheat, common millet, sunflower and sugar beet.

The present stage in the development of the collective farm system is characterised, consequently, by a new approach in principle to planning and material encouragement of agricultural production in conformity with the level of development of socialist agriculture and the entire national economy. The role of economic methods and incentives in the management of agriculture has been intensified, planning has been radically improved, economic independence and initiative of collective farms broadened, and the material interest of farmers in the final results of their labour has been raised. The measures for economic encouragement are important levers in raising labour productivity and overcoming the backwardness of agriculture. The economic reform in the countryside consolidates the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and accelerates the growth of living standards in town and countryside.

FARMERS LEARN TO MANAGE THE ECONOMY

The reinvigoration of economic work in the countryside requires qualified personnel for all sectors of collective farm production. Specialists are a great force in the countryside. They are organisers of production and leaders of the masses. They are champions of scientific and technological

progress in the countryside. The profitability of all sectors of production depends on the work of agronomists, zootechnicians, economists, engineers, and veterinaries. Specialists are the advocates of the policy of the Party and the government in the countryside.

The training of specialists in higher and special secondary educational establishments has been intensified. The army of qualified specialists is growing in strength. According to the data collected in November 1970, there were 390,000 specialists with higher or specialised secondary education in collective farms as compared with 232,000 in 1965; among them were 234,000 agronomists, zootechnicians and veterinary workers (against 165,000 in 1965). As of April 1, 1971, there were 60,577 agronomists in collective farms (96.4 per cent of whom had higher or specialised secondary education); 50,705 zootechnicians (94.5 per cent with higher or specialised secondary education); 57,418 veterinary workers (68.3 per cent); 76,066 engineers and mechanics (60.8 per cent). Some 84 per cent of chairmen and 66.7 per cent of their deputies had higher or specialised secondary education.

With the growing army of specialists there is every opportunity for them to be appointed as leaders of collective farms, teams and dairies which under modern conditions are large-scale sectors of production. As of April 1, 1969, some 20.5 per cent of team leaders and 20 per cent of dairy managers had a higher or specialised secondary education.

The economic reform in the countryside called for greater economic knowledge.

This is why village Communists began to organise lessons on economy. One-year economic schools for collective farm managers and specialists of collective farms have been opened in district centres. Every year, thousands of agronomists, zootechnicians and chairmen graduate from these schools and similar courses in collective farms. District and regional economic conferences of agronomists, zootechnicians and village engineers are regularly convened. "Specialist days" and exchanges of experience are arranged. Posts for economists have been created in collective farms.

At the beginning of 1968 there were 45,000 economists

in the countryside. The number of machine operators is growing. As of April 1, 1971, there were 1,476,000 tractor and harvester drivers and 592,000 lorry drivers. In view of the technical rearmament of agricultural production, machine operators and other workers of agriculture are being sent to various courses and schools of advanced techniques.

RESERVES

New organisational forms and methods of work are finding wide application. The economic activity and initiative in the selection of progressive organisation and production techniques and the utilisation of labour and material resources have been reinvigorated.

A typical feature of the development of the countryside of late is the struggle for the introduction of cost-accounting, which is becoming the principal method in the organisation of collective farm production. It is being introduced first of all in production teams and dairies with closed cycles of production.

Now the success depends on the organisational and economic work in the countryside, on the initiative of the masses. The cost-accounting units, which are rapidly growing in number, are the fruit of creative thinking and a great deal of economic work on the part of the boards of collective farms, specialists and rank-and-file members. Managers and collective farmers alike show a keen interest in economic work. They calculate the production costs and look for ways of reducing overheads and raising profits. At the end of 1966 the members of the Bolshevik Collective Farm in Rybinsk District, Krasnoyarsk Territory, appealed to all agricultural workers to launch a cost-reducing campaign. They drew up plans for the thrifty utilisation of funds and materials, and better fulfilment of cost-accounting planned assignments. Sources of economy were located in all sectors. In 1967 the farmers saved 97,000 rubles instead of 70,000 as originally planned. The initiative was supported by many other collective farms.

At the beginning of 1968 about two-thirds of the collective farms had introduced cost-accounting.

Scientific organisation of labour in collective farms is essential in the modern day and age. The results attained by the advanced farms prove the high efficiency of such organisation in the Soviet Union. The work of the administrative apparatus is being improved, and centralised control of production is spreading.

Scientific organisation of labour creates the conditions for a five-day working week. By August 1969 some 2,652 collective farms had introduced a five-day week. The farmers heartily welcomed the decision. As a result labour productivity has been raised and absenteeism reduced.

THE THIRD ALL-UNION CONGRESS OF COLLECTIVE FARMERS

The most important principles of the Rules of the Agricultural Artel adopted by the Second Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers, stood the test of time. The tasks put forward by the Party—to create a collective economy, to score a victory over poverty and backwardness, and to ensure a better life in the countryside—were successfully accomplished. The collective farms were then faced with new tasks which themselves changed and became more complex. Many of the provisions of the old rules were no longer appropriate to the development of the productive forces in the countryside or to the character of public relations in villages. So it was decided to draw up new Model Rules of Collective Farms.

A commission headed by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, prepared a draft of the new Rules, which were published for general discussion early in 1969. The draft was discussed in collective farms, at district meetings, regional and territorial conferences, republican congresses of collective farmers, numerous meetings of workers and employees of state and public

organisations, and in the national press. It was, in essence, a national referendum in which millions of people took part. The peasants unanimously approved the draft. They made suggestions and amendments to further consolidate public property, boost production and the sales to the state, and to raise the profitability of all sectors of collective farm production. Thousands of letters were sent to the CPSU Central Committee, newspapers and magazines, and other institutions and organisations with proposals and comments. The commission took them all into account in the final elaboration of the draft of the new Model Rules.

On November 25, 1969, the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers was convened in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. It was attended by the cream of the Soviet peasantry—leaders and innovators of production, growers of bumper harvests, experts in agriculture and cattle-breeding, famous machine operators, etc.

The congress was attended by 4,541 delegates; members of the commission for drafting the Model Rules of Collective Farms were also granted the status of delegates.

Collective farms of all Union republics, nationalities and peoples in the Soviet Union were represented.

Among the delegates were three Heroes of the Soviet Union, 639 Heroes of Socialist Labour, 23 twice Heroes of Socialist Labour, 2,401 holders of orders and medals, 7 winners of Lenin or State Prizes, and 1,685 participants of the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievements (1,224 of whom had won the exhibition's diplomas or medals); there were 2,250 members of either boards or auditing committees of collective farms, 1,629 members of Party bodies and 2,806 deputies to the Soviets (of whom 349 were deputies to the Supreme Soviets of the USSR or the Union republics); 2,193 delegates (48 per cent) had higher or secondary education, 11 delegates held master degrees, and 90 delegates were holders of the titles of honorary agronomist, zootechnician, doctor, landmanager or machine operator.

The delegates included 2,202 rank-and-file collective farmers—cultivators, cattle-breeders, machine operators and builders. The two-million strong army of machine operators was represented by 795 delegates.

The congress was opened by Terenty Maltsev, one of the veterans of the collective farm movement and a collective farm agronomist in Kurgan Region. His 39 years of collective farm work has received widespread recognition; besides being the holder of the title of Hero of Socialist Labour and the State Prize, he is a deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and an honorary member of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

The congress was addressed by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. He retraced the glorious history of the Soviet peasantry, analysed the development of agriculture and outlined the tasks of the collective farm system on the road to communism.

The report on the new Model Rules of Collective Farms was made by D. S. Polyansky, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee. He told the delegates about the discussion of the draft Rules and the most important proposals that were made.

Thirty-two delegates took part in the debates; 19 of them were chairmen of collective farms, 6 leaders of teams or groups, 5 were ordinary farmers, one was a zootechnician and one an agronomist.

The congress was greeted by representatives of the Soviet working class and intelligentsia and by guests from 18 countries (including Bulgaria, Rumania, the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Egypt, France and Italy).

The congress unanimously adopted the Model Rules and recommended to all collective farms to elaborate their own rules on this basis and approve them at general meetings. The congress adopted a resolution to inaugurate the Council of Collective Farms and to institute social security. The Council of 125 members—prominent representatives of the collective farm peasantry and leaders of Party and government organisations—was elected on November 27, the final day of the congress.

The congress and its resolutions speak eloquently of the triumph of Lenin's co-operative plan which has been implemented by the heroic endeavours of the Soviet people under the leadership of the CPSU.

THE NEW MODEL RULES OF COLLECTIVE FARMS

The new Rules are a code of life in the countryside. They correspond to the new stage in the development of collective farms and the nation-wide struggle to obtain an abundance of farm products; they are designed to improve social relations in the countryside and promote the cause of building communism.

In one section of the new Rules it is stated that "the collective farm as a public form of socialist economy fully corresponds to the tasks for further development of productive forces in the countryside, ensures the management of production by the collective farm masses on the basis of collective farm democracy, and strikes the right balance between the personal interests of collective farmers with public and national interests. The collective farm is the school of communism for the peasantry".

The Rules take into consideration the need to strengthen and multiply collective farm property. They lay down all the required organisational and legal prerequisites for the correct utilisation of land and collective farm property.

The economic independence and initiative of collective farms are greatly encouraged by the new Rules. This is specified in the clause dealing with the production, economic and financial activities of collective farms: "The collective farm manages its production according to the plan endorsed by the general meeting of collective farmers and by applying the most progressive, scientifically-based forms and methods of production organisation.... Production and financial activity of the collective farm are subject to economic cost-accounting."

This is what the new Rules say about the changes in remuneration for collective farmers: "Labour in the collective farm is remunerated in accordance with the quantity and quality of labour contributed by each collective farmer to the public economy on the principle 'higher pay for best work and results'." The collective farm fixes guaranteed pay for work in public production. In order to increase collective farmers' interest in boosting agricultural

production, basic pay must be supplemented by additional remuneration and other forms of material incentives.

The Rules define the legal principles for specialised enterprises, organisations and associations to be set up jointly by several collective farms or by collective farms and the state; it legalises the right of collective farms to set up auxiliary enterprises and industries. All this creates the prerequisites for raising the level of socialisation in agriculture, concentrating and specialising production, and drawing together collective farm and public property.

The strengthening of the public economy is closely linked with the further improvement of collective farm democracy. The new Rules legalise many new and tested forms by which farmers can participate in the management of the affairs of the *artel*; they extended the rights of general meetings of collective farmers, boards of collective farms and other administrative organs. "The management of affairs of the collective farm," say the new Rules, "is conducted on the basis of broad democracy and active participation of collective farmers in all affairs pertaining to the collective farms."

The rights of teams and dairies have been increased, and conditions are being created for widening their creative activities. According to the new Rules, the meeting of farmers in one sector of production elects a team leader whose appointment is to be approved by the board of the collective farm. Farmers can recall or release from duties the executives who fail to justify the trust put in them. The meeting of farmers decides whether the election of administrative and supervisory bodies should be open or secret.

Councils of teams—an excellent means by which farmers may participate in the management of public production—have fully proved their worth in practice. The new Rules say that these councils are to be elected at meetings of members of the team or unit. Their chairmen are concurrently heads of the units. The rights and duties of the councils are determined by the collective farm boards.

The new Rules duly reflect Lenin's democratic principles of management—electivity and removability of executives and administrative bodies, broad-based control over

the work of elected officials, and the right to recall officials who have failed to justify the trust placed in them.

The new Rules accord broad rights to farmers in fixing the duration of working time and vacations, and in giving disablement allowances. A member of a collective farm has the right to a job with guaranteed pay, assistance in raising his qualifications or acquiring a profession and social security.

At the same time the new Rules specify the duties of collective farmers. They must all adhere to administrative rules, abide by the decisions of general meetings and boards of collective farms and councils of units; they must also conform to labour discipline.

These provisions are in complete accordance with the consciousness of the farmers themselves.

The new Rules adopted on November 27, 1969 by the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers were called the Model Rules because they express the unity of the multifarious activity of collective farms and the similarity of their interests and aims. At the same time their main provisions take into consideration the features peculiar to different parts of the country. They serve as a basis for rules drawn up by each collective farm.

On November 28, 1969, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers approved the new Model Statute.

The adoption of the new Rules by collective farms was another major step forward in the development of the collective farm system and agriculture as a whole.

EMULATION

There are many forms of socialist emulation in the countryside today. The end of the 1950s saw the birth of the movement for a communist attitude towards labour. Its participants are raising labour productivity on the basis of progressive techniques and technology, scientific organisation of labour, and higher cultural and technical stan-

dards. This movement is exerting an ever growing influence on the education of the new man. The whole country has heard about the Pobeda Collective Farm in Krasnodar Territory, the 22nd Congress of the CPSU Collective Farm in Rostov Region, and the groups headed by V. A. Svetlichny, V. I. Kuznetsov and V. Y. Pervitsky, that were the first to win the title of "Collectives of Communist Labour".

Socialist emulation was reinvigorated by the economic reform. Thousands of teams, units and farms participated in the competition to be called collectives of efficient agricultural production.

This emulation is extremely exacting. Planned or average yields for the preceding 3 to 5 years have to be exceeded by 15 to 30 per cent depending on the conditions in each zone. The participants must apply a complex of agronomic techniques for raising the fertility of soils, use each hectare of ploughland effectively, adhere to crop rotation, cultivate the soil efficiently, correctly apply fertilisers, sow only high-grade seeds, and protect the fields from erosion and the plants from diseases and pests. One of the main conditions is low production costs and, hence, high profitability. Since the main role in agriculture is played by machine operators, much attention is given to the efficient exploitation of machines, organisation of two-shift work, progressive maintenance services, thrifty use of fuel and spares, and reduction of labour expenditure.

A characteristic of emulation is the desire of its participants to utilise both the achievements of science and the most up-to-date agricultural methods.

In 1967 emulation assumed a mass scale. Thousands of farms participated in honour of the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Dozens of collectives were awarded commemorative banners of the CPSU Central Committee, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the USSR Council of Ministers and the All-Union Central Committee of Trade Unions; many won the titles of "Collectives of Highly Efficient Agriculture".

Komsomol members are noted for their great initiative and innovations in socialist emulation. In 1967 the Central Committee of Komsomol announced a review of efficient production and conditions of work in dairies run by Kom-

somol and youth. The campaign involved 30,000 Komsomol and youth collectives, more than 20,000 of which fulfilled their obligations and plans ahead of schedule. The campaign gave birth to youth movements under the slogans "All-round mechanisation for each Komsomol and youth dairy", "Profitability in all Komsomol and youth dairies" and "No laggards".

Nearly 9,000 dairies were built or repaired during the campaign; more than 2,100 Komsomol and youth collectives went over to two-shift work; more than 140,000 young men and women were assigned to animal-breeding.

By efficient use of technology advanced workers can guarantee high productivity. Party, Komsomol and trade union organisations popularise the achievements of advanced workers. In Krasnodar Territory, for instance, 1,500 mechanised groups in sugar beet and corn production have been organised on the model of team headed by M. Klepikov and groups headed by V. Svetlichny and V. Pervitsky. Their labour productivity is 40 per cent higher and production costs 22-36 per cent lower than the average.

The team headed by M. I. Klepikov, a Candidate-Member to the CC CPSU and deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, became a kind of an academy with people coming from the Don and the Volga, from the Urals and Siberia to study its advanced methods. The team initiated a new movement, whose essence can be summed up by the slogan "If you can do it, teach your mate! Your neighbour's land is your land". It decided to help V. Nechayev's team from the neighbouring Krasny Oktyabr Collective Farm, which soon became one of the most advanced. It has also helped a lot of other teams. In winter the men study. Their excellent results are based on high professional skill and a thorough knowledge of grain cultivation. In 1971 the team collected 6.6 tons of wheat per hectare—1.6 tons more than the average for the district.

It is an old tradition amongst villagefolk to call the most experienced farmers "experts". The word "expert" has acquired a new significance in recent years. There are now two official titles: "First-class animal-breeding expert" and "Second-class animal-breeding expert". The holders of such

titles are eligible for 20 and 10 per cent additional pay, respectively.

In 1968, when the nation joined in the competition to fulfil the five-year plan ahead of schedule in honour of the centenary of Lenin's birth, emulation for efficient agriculture and animal-breeding was reinvigorated. The working people of Uzhur District, Altai Territory, launched a competition under the slogan "Follow the Leninist path in management". In 1970—the centenary of Lenin's birth and the last year of the Eighth Five-Year Plan—the emulation became particularly significant. The emulation to mark the approach of the 24th Congress of the CPSU went under the slogan "Shock work everyday". Crop-growers and animal-breeders took on increased obligations, and they "saw in" the congress by selfless work in the fields and dairies.

The results were excellent. Farms in all parts of the country set examples of efficient agricultural production.

Emulation is enhanced by various forms of material or moral incentives. Typical are "evenings of labour glory", awards of the titles of Merited Collective Farmer, Honorary Farmer, Best Ploughman of the Republic, Best Milk-Maid and the inscription of the names of veterans and shock-workers in the Annals of Labour Glory. The advanced workers are awarded certificates and bonuses or presents. Collective farmers who win the title of Merited Collective Farmer get special certificates and diplomas, in addition to a 10 per cent increase in pay and certain privileges. Many collective farms organise parties in honour of advanced workers, for initiating young farmers, and use many other forms of moral stimulation suggested by the farmers themselves.

The correct combination of material and moral incentives stimulates the initiative of peasants and their creative activity.

THE FIRST RESULTS

At the end of the eighth five-year period the output of farm produce increased by 21 per cent as compared with 12 per cent in the preceding five-year period. The average

annual gross production of grain increased by 37 per cent. In 1970 a record 186.8 million tons of grain were harvested.

Gross Production, Yields and Purchases of Grain in 1961-1970
(in farms of all categories)

	1961-1965 (annual average)	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1966-1970 (annual average)
Gross harvest (mln tons)	130.4	171.2	147.9	169.5	162.4	186.8	167.6
Yields (tons per hectare)	1.02	1.37	1.21	1.40	1.32	1.56	1.37
State purchases (mln tons)	51.6	75.0	57.2	69.0	55.5	73.3	66.0

The average gross annual production of grain, yields and state purchases of grain went up by a third. This was due to the fact that yields increased from 1.02 tons to 1.37 tons per hectare. In 1970 the highest yield of grain in the country's history was recorded.

Successes in the production of industrial crops and cattle-breeding are quite significant. The high yields of crops, increased productivity of animal husbandry and greater volume of agricultural production during the eighth five-year period satisfied the country's growing requirements in grain, milk, meat and other farm produce. The targets of production and purchase plans for most agricultural products were exceeded. In the period from 1966 to 1970 the state made average annual purchases of 66 million tons of grain, 28 per cent more than the average annual figure of 51.6 million tons in the period 1961-1965; 6.1 million tons of cotton, or 22 per cent more than in 1961-1965 (5 million); 11.6 million tons of meat, or 39 per cent over the 1961-1965 figure of 8.6 million tons; 43.2 million tons of milk, compared with 31.1 million tons in 1961-1965, or 39 per cent more, and 14,400 million eggs, or 66 per cent above the 8,700 million figure in 1961-1965.

The eighth five-year period was marked by stable growth rates of agricultural production. The introduction of agroeconomic, economic and organisational measures contributed to higher yields of crops and better productivity of animals.

In 1970 the collective farms accounted for 53 per cent of grain production, 77 per cent of cotton production, and 92 per cent of sugar beet production. Collective farms accounted for 48 per cent of the overall commercial production, 56 per cent of the production of farm products, and 44 per cent of the production of animal produce. Collective farms are major producers of cotton, sugar beet and sunflower. In 1970 they accounted for 50 per cent of grain purchases.

Labour productivity has been raised and production costs lowered. In 1965 direct expenditures of labour for the production of one ton of grain (excluding corn) amounted to 6.2 man-days (in 1970 they amounted to only 2.6 man-days). The expenditure of labour for weight accumulation per ton of livestock was reduced from 111 man-days in 1965 to 83 man-days in 1970, and that of pigs from 93 man-days to 65 man-days.

The economic position of collective farms has strengthened. In 1970 their non-distributable assets were 17,700 million rubles larger than in 1965. Cash incomes increased by 11,600 million rubles in this time; in 1970 gross incomes amounted to 22,800 million rubles—4,900 million rubles more than in 1965. Cash incomes of collective farms went up on average from 550,000 rubles in 1965 to 952,000 rubles in 1970, and gross incomes from 499,000 to 689,000 rubles.

Collective farms became more prosperous. In 1965 only 36.9 per cent of collective farms had derived more than 20,000 rubles in gross income per 100 hectares of ploughland; in 1970 there were 55.5 per cent of such collective farms, and 19.3 per cent of them derived an income of more than 40,000 rubles.

So it became possible to make annual increases in pay for collective farmers. In 1970 collective farms spent 15,000 million rubles on remunerating their members in cash and kind as compared with 10,900 million rubles in 1965 (according to the comparative data which takes into consideration the actual number of collective farms in 1970). The average pay per man-day was raised from 2.7 rubles in 1965 to 3.9 rubles in 1970.

The number of collective farms with relatively low pay scales was considerably reduced. For example, the propor-

tion of collective farms which paid less than 2 rubles per man-day decreased from 33.1 per cent in 1965 to 3.5 per cent in 1969, and the proportion of collective farms paying less than 3 rubles was reduced from 40.8 per cent to 28.3 per cent. The number of collective farms which paid more than 3 rubles increased correspondingly.

The great successes scored by agriculture during the eighth five-year period considerably increased the supply and variety of foodstuffs. By 1970 the per capita consumption of meat had gone up by 7 kg, milk by 56 kg, eggs by 3 dozen, and sugar by 4.6 kg as compared with 1965. The consumption of bread, and potatoes dropped, but flour products were produced in greater variety. The following table illustrates the progress made in this respect:

Per Capita Consumption of Basic Foodstuffs
(in kilogrammes)

	1960	1965	1970
Meat and lard (including poultry and chitterlings)	40	41	48
Milk and dairy products	240	251	307
Eggs	118	124	159
Fish and fish products	9.9	12.6	15.4
Sugar	28.0	34.2	38.8
Vegetable oil	5.3	7.1	6.8
Potatoes	143	142	130
Vegetables and melons	70	72	82
Flour products (recalculated in terms of flour, groats, beans and macaroni)	164	156	149

From the results of the eighth five-year period one can conclude that agriculture has been steadily advancing on the basis of intensification of production, higher yields and better productivity of livestock. Under conditions of developed socialism new reserves have been uncovered in collective and state farms: these reserves help accomplish the tasks set by the Communist Party.

THE 24th CONGRESS OF THE CPSU

The Directives of the 24th Party Congress for the country's economic development in the period 1971-1975 contained concrete assignments for agriculture.

The aim is to increase average annual output by 20 to 22 per cent compared with the average for the preceding five years, to satisfy more fully the population's demand for foodstuffs and industry's demand for industrial crops. Agriculture must produce from approximately the same area some 16 to 18,000 million rubles' worth more of products than during the previous five-year period. Grain production remains the key problem. The average annual production of grain is to be increased to at least 195 million tons.

Just as before, the task will be tackled by intensifying production, increasing yields, improving the structure of sown areas and the quality of grain. It is planned to increase the production of grain on irrigated or drained lands and to push ahead with the creation of major grain-producing districts on the irrigated lands in the south of the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the Volga area.

Important tasks have been assigned to cattle-breeders. The decisions of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers on developing livestock and poultry production along industrial lines will help accomplish these tasks. The present level of engineering, the building industry and the industries which manufacture balanced and biological fodder is high enough for the construction of large livestock farms and poultry factories to be stepped up. The average annual output of meat will be increased to 14.3 million tons (deadweight); that of milk to 92.3 million tons; wool to 464,000 tons; and eggs to 46,700 million.

Family farmsteads continue to play an important role in the production of meat and milk, so collective and state farms, while giving priority to social production, must help the population to acquire livestock and poultry and provide them with fodder.

Labour productivity will be raised by 37 to 40 per cent and production costs will be considerably reduced.

The intensification of agriculture is based on all-round mechanisation, application of chemicals and land reclama-

tion. On these grounds the Party's Central Committee has determined the amount of capital investments to be made. The state and the collective farms will invest nearly 129,000 million rubles—as much as during the preceding two five-year plans put together.

Collective and state farms are being provided with highly efficient machinery, new equipment is being designed for all-round mechanisation and automation. This includes machinery and production lines for livestock-breeding complexes using industrial production methods. The electricity power supply for production and communal purposes will be approximately doubled during the five-year period. State power stations are to supply all collective and state farms, including their production undertakings, houses and communal organisations.

A great deal of attention in the ninth five-year period is focussed on a grand programme of land reclamation and the creation of zones of guaranteed commercial grain production on irrigated lands. It is planned to irrigate 3 million hectares, including 650,000 hectares for cotton plantations.

In humid areas it is planned to drain 5 million hectares, 3 million of them using under-drainage.

The principle of fixed plans of deliveries, which has fully justified itself, is to be retained throughout the ninth five-year period; the same concerns the encouragement of collective farms to sell the most important products to the state over and above the plan. The task put before each grain-growing collective farm and state farm, each district, region, territory and republic is to sell at least 35 per cent more grain than envisaged by the plan. The sales of animal products are to exceed the planned targets by at least 8 per cent a year.

One of the most important tasks is to increase production efficiency in collective and state farms. This involves better organisation of labour, additional material incentives for increased output, improved quality, reduction of production costs and effective use of machinery.

The 24th Party Congress underlined that the development of agriculture is a nation-wide task. Its accomplishment will require strenuous efforts by everyone.

II. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

COMMUNISM AND THE PEASANTRY

The transition to the all-out construction of communism signified a new stage in the history of the collective farm peasantry and the Soviet people as a whole. The profound transformations which the Communist Party undertook after the October Revolution destroyed the system of capitalist exploitation and resulted in the evolution of a developed socialist society. Now the Soviet people are building a communist society.

There are tremendous tasks involved. First of all it is necessary to build a new material and technical basis, vastly increase labour productivity in all sectors of the economy, and boost industrial and agricultural production to a level which would fully satisfy the requirements of society and provide all citizens with ample opportunities for intellectual and physical development. After the creation of the new material and technical basis Soviet industry will become technically the most powerful and effective industry, and agriculture the most flourishing, harmoniously developed and efficient in the world.

The differences between town and countryside and between mental and physical labour are being gradually eliminated on the basis of the mighty development of productive forces. This is one of the grandest and most noble tasks in building communism.

The communist education of the urban and rural population, the complete eradication of the vestiges of capitalism in the mentality of the toiling people and the harmonious diffusion of culture are just as important. The 24th Party Congress pointed out: "A great project—the building of communism—cannot be advanced without the harmonious development of man himself. Communism is inconceivable without a high level of culture, education, sense of civic duty and inner maturity of people just as it is inconceivab-

le without the appropriate material and technical basis."¹

The historic tasks of the transition to communism can only be accomplished if there is a steady consolidation both of the co-operation and mutual assistance between the working people of town and country and of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. The working class creates the new material and technical basis not only for industry, transport and construction, but also for agriculture. Electrification and all-round mechanisation of collective and state farms form the basis for higher labour productivity, increased agricultural production, the transition of the Soviet countryside to communist social relations and the convergence of town and country. Towns are increasing their assistance to villages in culture and education, personnel training and other fields. At the same time they set an example for the new way of life and help countryfolk to improve their living and housing conditions.

The peasantry also greatly contributes to the construction of communist society. It produces food and raw materials for key industries. It is impossible to provide an abundance of products without a sharp increase in agricultural output. Moreover, the peasantry is a reserve force for replenishing the working class and the intelligentsia.

The joint creative work of the toilers of town and country is essential for building communism. The consolidation of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry reflects the deep-going social process whereby class differences are eradicated, the transformation of workers and peasants into toilers of a classless communist society.

The CPSU Programme states: "Under communism there will be no classes, and the social, economic and cultural distinctions and differences in living conditions, between town and countryside will disappear; the countryside will rise to the level of the town in the development of the productive forces and the nature of work, the forms of production relations, living conditions and the well-being

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 100.

of the population. With the victory of communism mental and physical labour will merge organically in the production activity of people. The intelligentsia will no longer be a distinct social stratum. Workers by hand will have risen in cultural and technological standards to the level of workers by brain.

"Thus, communism will put an end to the division of society into classes and social strata..."¹

The growth and renovation of productive forces is accompanied by historic transformations of human character, people's relations at work and in everyday life, and the structure of society. These changes are becoming more and more conspicuous in daily life.

The drawing together of the working class and the peasantry is a principal feature of the modern age. The face of the peasantry as a whole is changing most radically. It is catching up with the working class, i.e., the qualified industrial workers, in social, economic, cultural and communal standards. This implies eradication of the distinctions between mental and physical labour.

The convergence of classes and class strata is the aim of the social policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet state. This policy is being implemented consistently in accordance with the requirements and objective opportunities for the transition to communism. The Central Committee's report to the 24th Party Congress stated: "The Party's policy is directed towards helping to bring the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the intelligentsia closer together, and gradually erasing the essential distinctions between town and countryside and between brainwork and manual labour. This is one of the key sectors in the building of a classless communist society."²

The planned management of social processes, particularly of changes in social structure, is peculiar to socialism as a society built consciously in conformity with a scientific theory and a scientifically based programme.

The country's tasks are growing in scale from one five-year plan to another. Each of them is a component of the

¹ *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1961, pp. 44-45.

² *24th Congress of the CPSU*, p. 87.

main task—the convergence of classes and class strata, transformation of a society divided into various social strata and groups into a homogeneous society consisting of a single communist collective of toilers.

INDUSTRIALISATION OF FARM WORK

This process is founded on the transformation of farm work into a kind of industrial work.

Great revolutionary changes in the material and technical basis of agriculture have occurred during the years of Soviet power. At the dawn of the collective farm movement, Lenin dreamt of 100,000 tractors to convince peasants of the advantages of collective farming. By the beginning of 1969 there were 3.6 million tractors (in 15 hp units), 580,000 harvesters, 1.1 million lorries and numerous other farm machines.

The great supply of machinery helped agriculture to increase the level of mechanisation and reduce the amount of manual labour. It has already been pointed out that ploughing, sowing of grain, cotton and sugar beet and harvesting of grain and silage have been fully mechanised. Mechanisation of potato and vegetable sowing and harvesting of corn is nearing completion. The level of mechanisation in livestock farms has risen considerably.

The use of electricity revolutionises agriculture and increases labour productivity fivefold.

In the second half of the 1960s the consumption of electricity in agriculture went up by 70 per cent, 60 per cent of it being used for production purposes. In 1970 collective farms had on average nearly 60 electric motors, and state farms about 150 electric motors. Electric power available per worker increased sixfold in the period from 1940 to 1970, and has doubled in the last decade. In the early 1970s, however, agriculture still consumed 40-50 per cent of the total power used in industry, and only three odd per cent of electric power.

Meanwhile, an analysis of the work of advanced groups has shown that the all-round mechanisation of production

and power consumption should be higher than in industry because of seasonal work in agriculture and the restricted exploitation time of machines.

The scientific and technological revolution which began in the mid-1950s not only raised labour productivity but also affected both man's role in the production process and the nature of his labour.

Mechanisation and electrification of agriculture and the application of chemicals have determined the nature, direction and scale of the social changes in the countryside. A new type of worker, who combines physical and mental labour, has emerged.

With the industrialisation of farm work broad prospects are opening up for the farmer to raise his educational and cultural level, participate in political life and culture, and pursue reasonable and interesting recreation. The replacement of manual labour by machine work and higher labour productivity satisfy man's requirements in material benefits to a greater degree, reduce the time needed for production, and increase leisure time which, as Marx wrote, man needed "for education, for intellectual development, for the fulfilling of social functions and for social intercourse, for the free-play of his bodily and mental activity..."¹

Characterising communist society, Karl Marx said that wealth would be calculated according to the amount of free time as a condition for the harmonious development of man's mental and physical abilities and talents. This is why the Communist Party and the Soviet state pay so much attention to reducing the working day and increasing free time. In the past 30 or 40 years working time has been reduced by 20 per cent; men now have 2.5 hours and women 6.8 hours more free time each week. Free time of peasants has increased by 50 per cent for men and by 200 per cent for women.

In recent years the collective farms have begun to normalise the working time of their members. The work hours are being reduced: machine operators, milkmaids, builders, etc., are being switched over to shift work.

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume I, Moscow, 1972, p. 252.

It is worth mentioning that many farmers spend additional free time in studying. The amount of free time is, of course, affected by seasonal work, and in this respect the country will differ from the town for quite a long time yet. Moreover, housework still consumes much of the spare time of villagers, particularly that of women.

URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION: DYNAMICS AND CORRELATION

The industrialisation of agricultural work affects the peasant's position in socio-economic and cultural life. The increasing efficiency of labour and the growing importance of the individual worker in agriculture releases a great labour force for the development of other sectors of the economy, culture and education.

The censuses of 1959 and 1970 revealed the exact trends and scale of the social changes occurring in this country under the conditions of a developed socialist society. The most important of these is the growth of towns and the increase in urban population at the expense of the rural population.

This phenomenon has been characteristic of the country's progress ever since it took the road of industrialisation. Under present conditions these two processes have retained their significance and scale. Towns remain centres of scientific and technological progress and culture; they also serve as centres for practically all sectors of production, with the exception of agriculture. The growth of industrial production, construction and transport continues to depend on the migration of the rural population.

In 1959 some 108.8 million people (52 per cent of the entire population) lived in the countryside. In 1970 some 56 per cent of the population (136 million) lived in towns (cf. 82.1 per cent of the entire population in the countryside in 1926). The urban population increased by 36 million in 11 years; 40 per cent of this figure stemmed from natural growth; the rest was due to migration from the rural areas.

This process is based on the development of the material and technical basis of the national economy. The growth of industry and transport raises the demand for manpower, while the mechanisation of agriculture and greater supply of electricity allows the countryside to provide towns with redundant manpower.

However it would be wrong to explain all this by technical and economic factors only. The reasons for the reduction of the rural population are quite numerous, the most important of them being the difference in living, cultural and educational standards between town and country. Socialism has opened before rural young people a wide road to education, culture and science. Higher and specialised secondary educational establishments and cultural institutions being mainly concentrated in towns, that makes them attractive.

The population growth increased from 1.5 million a year in the period 1926-1938 to 1.7 million in the years 1959-1970. This happened in spite of the drop in the total rural population (by a fifth in the period 1926-1970) and the decreased birth rate. The reasons were better living conditions, higher cultural level and a drop in the mortality rate in the countryside. This is also manifested in a certain drop in the migration of the rural population to towns. The average annual drop in the rural population was reduced from 525,000 in the period 1927-1938, and 1,080,000 in 1939-1958 (as a consequence of the war) to 282,000 in 1959-1969.

The migration of the rural population to towns is one of the most important processes in the industrialisation of society. In conditions of socialism this process can be easily regulated. Now the Communist Party and the Soviet government are implementing a system of measures for restricting the uncalled-for migration of the rural population to towns. It is important to keep young people in collective and state farms. The scientific and technical revolution and the accelerated growth of production and culture in the countryside create the basis for a balanced distribution of the population between town and country and for the return to the country of young peasants who have been educated in towns.

SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PEASANTRY

Migration of the rural population to towns is not the most important aspect of social change that occurs under conditions of developed socialism and the building of communism. The transition of people from one social status to another is just as significant.

A typical feature of social development in the USSR since reconstruction of the national economy has been the rapid numerical growth of the working class and the intelligentsia and the steady decrease in the numerical strength of the peasantry. In 1928 the peasantry accounted for four-fifths of the population, in 1939 it comprised a half, in 1959 about a third, and in 1970 only a fifth of the population. The Soviet peasantry today is collectivist and socialist in its make-up; it is taking an active part in the building of Communist society.

The reduction in the numbers of collective farmers has been due both to the movement to industry and other sectors of the national economy and to the reorganisation of weak collective farms into state farms. In the period from 1950 to 1967 the number of state farm workers increased by more than 4 million people as a result of the latter process.

The census of 1959 revealed that all the basic social groups of Soviet society were present in the rural population. Collective farmers and their families constituted the largest segment—62.3 million people (57.3 per cent); there were 34.7 million workers (31.9 per cent), 11.4 million office employees (10.5 per cent), and only 0.4 million (0.3 per cent) non-collectivised peasants and craftsmen.

For many years countryfolk have been identified with farm work because the great majority of the rural population was employed in agricultural production. The collectivisation and mechanisation of agriculture raised labour productivity and released manpower for other work. The migration to towns involved only a portion of the agricultural labour force. Many peasants changed their jobs, but not their place of work.

In 1959 only 36.2 million (38.4 million, taking town-dwellers into account), or approximately 38.6 per cent of the country's working population earned their living from agriculture. In 1926 some 71.7 million people were employed in agriculture. At that time one agricultural worker produced just enough for himself and one other man, but in 1959 he produced enough to feed 4.4 people besides himself. Mechanisation and higher labour productivity reduced the proportion of the working population employed in agriculture from 50.1 per cent in 1939 to 38.8 per cent in 1959. The release of surplus manpower from agricultural production is still going on. From average annual calculations the number of people employed in agriculture dropped from 32 million in 1960 to 29.2 million in 1970. In the same period the number of peasants working in collective production dropped from 22.3 million to 17 million (one of the reasons was the reorganisation of some collective farms into state farms).

The census of 1959 shows the collective-farm peasantry to be a socially homogeneous class. At the roots of this uniformity lies the public ownership of the means of production. However, internal class distinctions are quite pronounced amongst the peasantry. Peasant groups differ from one another in the nature of their work and the level of professional skill and qualification. There are two major groups comprising people who do mainly physical work and those who use their brains rather than their hands. Of the total of 38.3 million people employed in agriculture in 1959, 36.9 million (96.3 per cent) came into the first category, and only 1.4 million (3.7 per cent) into the second; some 33.9 million people (28.7 million collective farmers and 5.1 million workers) were directly employed in manual labour on farms. Unskilled labourers with a numerical strength of 24.2 million (71.4 per cent) predominated in this group.

Typical of the change in the professional structure of collective farmers is the growing number of jobs concerned with mechanised labour. In 1960 there were 2.6 million tractor, harvester and lorry drivers; by 1970 this figure had increased to nearly 3.5 million. After the reorganisation of the MTS there was a sharp increase in the number of

machine operators on collective farms. In the summer of 1957 there were 338,000 machine operators on collective farms, in 1960—1,767,000, and in 1970—2,042,000. The transfer of industrial workers from the MTS to collective farms narrowed the gap between the structures of workers' job qualifications in collective and state farms.

With the march of scientific and technological progress the jobs of agricultural workers become more specialised. The portion of collective farmers having definite jobs is on the increase. Many new trades make their appearance while the nature of the old ones changes. The following data illustrate the point.

Of the 17 million collective farmers in collective production in 1970 (an average for the year), 5.2 million (30.8 per cent) had a trade of one kind or another. The number of unskilled farm labourers decreased by 10-15 per cent compared with 1959.

These figures take into account just the one basic job of a farm worker. Today by the term machine operator we mean not only tractor or harvester drivers, but lorry drivers, fitters and lathe operators. In winter farmers who work in auxiliary enterprises or industries learn additional jobs. Many farmers now have two or more trades. These developments are evidence of the large-scale professionalisation of the collective farm peasantry and the reduction of the number of unskilled labourers.

Of the 5.2 million collective farmers having specific jobs in agriculture in 1970 7.5 per cent had higher or specialised secondary education; 10.9 per cent were accountants or junior administrators (team leaders, managers of dairies, etc.) with no special education; 38.3 per cent were machine operators or lorry drivers; and 43.3 per cent were animal-breeders (milkmaids, cattle-yard workers, etc.).

The high percentages of machine operators and cattle-breeders are worth examining more closely. Whilst the growing numbers of the former is a sign of technological progress and greater mechanisation of farmwork, the high proportion of the latter is, on the contrary, a sign of poor mechanisation which artificially increases the demand for labour. Some data on mechanisation of the principal processes in animal-breeding will illustrate the point. In 1970

milking was mechanised to a level of 49 per cent, supply of water—69 per cent, fodder distribution—12 per cent, and manure removal—32 per cent.

An important result of social development in the country was the growth in the number of mental workers and the intelligentsia. At the beginning of 1959 there were 1.4 million people doing non-physical work as compared with 60,500 in 1926.

In recent years there has been an even greater increase in the numbers of qualified people in agriculture. Specialists with higher or specialised secondary education accounted for only 1 per cent of all those employed in collective farm in 1960; by 1970 this proportion had risen to 2.3 per cent. In November 1970 there were 820,000 specialists with higher or specialised secondary education, nearly 400,000 of whom worked on collective farms. Collective farms had more than 230,000 agronomists, zootechnicians and veterinary workers. The standard of education and professional training of specialists has grown noticeably. People with higher or specialised secondary education have taken over from non-qualified workers. As of April 1, 1971, 96.4 per cent of agronomists, 94.5 per cent of zootechnicians, and 60.8 per cent of engineers and technicians were specialists with varying levels of education. It is worth noting that by this time most of the collective farm administrators (including 84 per cent of the chairmen) were people with higher or specialised secondary education.

CONVERGENCE OF THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF SOCIALIST OWNERSHIP

Eradicating differences in production relations, primarily in the attitude towards property, is a determining factor in the transition to a classless society. Lenin wrote that "the abolition of classes means placing *all* citizens on an *equal* footing with regard to the *means of production* belonging to society as a whole"¹. By ending the domination of private

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 146.

ownership over the instruments and means of production, socialism removed the cause which led to the exploitation of man by man and which divided society into hostile classes. The attainment of socialism solved a great social problem—the removal of the exploiting classes. When individual peasant ownership was replaced by socialist ownership, the class position of the peasantry radically changed and the primary distinctions between the working class and the peasantry disappeared. Those which still remain reflect the peculiarities of their roads to socialism, and the different levels of development and socialisation of industrial and agricultural production.

Socialist production in industry arose from the expropriation of large-scale capitalist machine production. State ownership of industry immediately ensured a high level of socialisation for it. The worker's ownership status is linked with socialist industry as a whole. The forms of labour organisation and remuneration of the worker and his share of social wealth depend on the general level of development of industry. The high level of technology in industry has given birth to highly skilled workers with developed cultural standards. They justly remain at the forefront of the socialist society as the guiding force in the building of communism.

Socialist agricultural production grew out of the amalgamation of small peasant holdings and their livestock and implements into co-operative associations (artels). Here the socialisation of production took the form of co-operative, or group, ownership. The ownership relations of collective farmers were confined to their co-operatives. The level of development of the latter determined the share of social wealth distributed amongst the peasants. Since agricultural production was insufficiently developed, even under socialism peasants have been involved not just with public (co-operative) production but with individual farmsteads which serve as an additional source of livelihood for them and as a source of food for towns. This impedes the social and cultural development of peasants and helps sustain the vestiges of private-property psychology.

The predominance of natural forms of payment within co-operatives and of economic relations between collective

farms and the state in the initial period was due to insufficient development of agriculture. In order to step up the mechanisation of agriculture the state had to retain ownership of tractors and machines and to concentrate them in MTS which serve the collective farms in return for payment in kind on agreed terms. The state determined the legal norms for the functioning of co-operatives, fixing the general assignments and regulating in detail all work in collective farms (as regards sowing, cultivation and harvesting, use of the means of production of collective farms and MTS, and obligatory deliveries of products). The restriction of co-operative, or collective farm, ownership of the means and output of production was dictated by the need to utilise the maximum funds for industrialisation and the country's defence. This, however, had a negative effect on the peasant's material interest in the development of artels and impeded agricultural production.

With the growth of the Soviet Union's economic might and the economic consolidation of the farms themselves many of the restrictions were no longer necessary. In the mid-1950s the system of obligatory deliveries was gradually replaced by centralised planned purchases at prices which ensured profitability of collective farm production. In 1958 the system of MTS was reorganised, farm machines being handed over to collective farms.

These measures strengthened the co-operative group form of ownership, enriched its material content and extended its social and economic functions. Economic relations between the state and collective farms were placed on a mutually beneficial basis. Peasants had a greater material interest in the development of the artel economy, and thus began to work harder. Fuller and more effective use was made of the economic and social potentialities of collective farms as co-operative enterprises. The results show that the co-operative group form of ownership is fully in line with the level and requirements of the development of the Soviet countryside during the period of communist construction.

It is characteristic that with the strengthening and growth of co-operative group ownership more signs appeared of the convergence of the two forms of socialist property and

the emergence of joint, communist ownership by the whole people. The process is clearly manifested in the growth and changing nature of non-distributable assets and in the high level of the socialisation of the means of production.

In the period from 1960 to 1970 non-distributable assets (in comparable farms and at comparable prices) increased from 26,400 million to 60,000 million rubles. There was a considerable increase in the amount of machinery which accounted for the major part of non-distributable assets. By their nature and in their structure non-distributable assets are becoming more like the production assets of the entire people. The growth of non-distributable assets goes hand in hand with the consolidation of the material and technical basis of collective farms. On this basis the collective farm, or co-operative, forms of enterprise are moving nearer to industrial enterprises in level of mechanisation and methods of production.

The increase in the level of socialisation of collective farm production was manifested in further amalgamation of farms. Their number was reduced from 91,200 in 1953 to 30,000 in 1970. Some collective farms were reorganised into state farms. As a result there was a considerable growth in the average size of collective farms.

The further socialisation of collective farm production is moving towards the creation of inter-farm associations. Collective farms are now joining forces more and more often to solve major economic problems, since construction of electricity generating stations, roads, factories and irrigation systems are within reach of only several collective farms joining their efforts. At the end of 1970 there were 4,554 inter-farm associations, organisations and institutions, including building organisations, poultry farms, power stations, repair shops, sanatoria and holiday hotels. Such associations involve all fields of activity, but they are most numerous in the building industry.

After the war there was rapid expansion of the state farm system of agriculture. In 1953 they accounted for only 10 per cent of the total sown area, in 1958, nearly 30 per cent, and in 1970, nearly 48 per cent. This was due both to the organisation of new state farms in the virgin lands

and to the reorganisation of economically weak collective farms into state farms. Nearly 19,000 collective farms were reorganised into state farms in the period 1954-1960 alone.

It soon became clear, however, that the problem of amalgamating the two forms of ownership could not be solved by administrative measures, as the process is subject to economic laws which depend on the level and character of the development of productive forces. The amalgamation must be based not on the curtailment of the collective farm form of ownership but on its further improvement and greater socialisation.

Increase in the level of socialisation of agricultural production is also manifested in the gradual ousting of family farmsteads of peasants and workers by the public economy. In the middle of the 1960s, 15 million collective farm families and 17-18 million workers' and office employees' families had farmsteads. In the early 1950s, family farmsteads were an important source of supply of farm produce, particularly animal products, for town and country. In 1953 they accounted for 52 per cent of the total production of meat and lard, 67 per cent of milk, 85 per cent of eggs, and 15 per cent of wool. Collective and state farms had played the leading role in the production of grain, cotton, sugar beet and sunflower long before the war, but only came to the fore in the output of animal products at the end of the 1950s. In 1970 collective and state farms accounted for 99 per cent of the total production of grain crops, 65 per cent of meat, 64 per cent of milk, 47 per cent of eggs, 81 per cent of wool, 62 per cent of vegetables, and 35 per cent of potatoes. These figures show that family farmsteads still play an important part in the production of eggs and potatoes. Although their share in livestock production has diminished since 1953, it still remains quite high. In 1970 family farmsteads produced more than a third of the total output of meat and milk. However, a large part of the production is consumed by the families themselves. Family farmsteads accounted for only 8 per cent of the total commercial output of crops, and 14 per cent of animal products in 1970.

The growth of public production in collective and state farms creates the economic conditions in which family

farmsteads will disappear. Today the prosperity of farmers depends on incomes from collective work and not from farmsteads, whose profitability potential is very low. In the period 1966-67 alone incomes of collective farmers from public production went up by 20 per cent.

The further convergence of collective farm, or co-operative, and state ownership and the emergence of a single communist form of ownership will completely eradicate the differences between the working class and the peasantry in terms of their attitude to the means of production, their role in the public organisation of labour, and the forms and amount of remuneration. The toiler in communist society will only fully satisfy his requirements with a common social economy.

CONVERGENCE OF URBAN AND RURAL LIVING STANDARDS

The mechanisation of agriculture and the growth of labour productivity on collective and state farms, consolidation and development of collective farm ownership are essential for bringing the standards of living in town and country closer together. The process can be seen in the gradual elimination of the differences in the form and amount of payment to workers and peasants.

The abolition of the work-day unit and the adoption of the cash payment system in the 1950s and 1960s were events of great social and economic significance. By 1958 the average annual pay of a collective farmer had gone up 73 per cent from the 1953 level, and the proportion of cash in his pay by 190 per cent. Gradually collective farms began to introduce guaranteed pay without work-day units to replace the system of quarterly cash advances.

In the past the remuneration fund was drawn from the balance of incomes after the collective farm had fulfilled its obligations to the state and made the required deductions into non-distributable assets, production and other funds. This had an adverse effect on pay, the prosperity of

peasants and their material interest in the results of social labour. It sometimes happened that in economically weak collective farms nothing remained for payment. Now the remuneration fund receives top priority and is replenished irrespective of the results of the economic year. The size is predetermined on the basis of tariff rates and norms of output established for state farms. In line with the decision of CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers, adopted on May 16, 1966, the state is the guarantor of the new form of remuneration; if necessary, it gives the required long-term credits to collective farms for replenishing the fund and short-term credits for replenishing the seasonal shortages of working assets, including labour remuneration.

The adoption of the new system put an end to one of the biggest differences in the social and economic position of workers and peasants. It improved considerably the financial position of peasants and gave new impetus to their work. In 1965 collective farms paid 2.68 rubles per man-day; by 1969 the figure had risen to 3.62 rubles. During the eighth five-year period (1966-1970) the incomes of farmers from collective production went up by 42 per cent.

Payment in kind is retained, but it is no longer the basic form of remuneration. In 1959 it accounted for 41 per cent of remuneration, and in 1966 it dropped to about 15 per cent. It is proportionate to the remuneration in cash. The share of dairy products, fruits and vegetables, designed mainly or exclusively for family consumption, has been raised.

The share of farmers and their families in the consumption of national public funds (education, culture, health protection) is growing. The Soviet state offers free education and medical care to all citizens, it covers a large part of expenses for raising children. In 1960-1967 the per capita payments and grants from social funds went up by 50 per cent.

The social consumption funds of collective farms are also expanding. They go to grant assistance, pay sick leaves, etc. In 1959, for example, the Rossiya Collective Farm in Stavropol Territory allocated an average of 14.4 rubles from the social funds for each farmer, in 1961—

19.5 rubles, and in 1963—33 rubles. On the whole, real incomes today are four times higher than in 1940.

However, the level of consumption of social funds by collective farmers is lower than that by workers, office employees and professionals. In 1966 payments and privileges from the social consumption funds amounted to 37 rubles per blue- and white-collar worker and to 17 rubles per farmer. The standards of social and everyday services in the countryside are also lower.

The new system of old-age pensions, introduced by the USSR Supreme Soviet on July 15, 1964, was an important step forward in eradicating differences between town and country. Up till this time pensions had been paid by the farms themselves, and there was no inherent guarantee of payment. In advanced farms the members received pensions, paid vacations and disability grants. But weak farms were not in a position to do the same. In January 1965 all disabled or retired members of artels began to receive pensions; in 1966 pensions were paid to 7.69 million, and in 1968, to more than 10 million farmers. The common pensions scheme shows what great achievements have been made by collective farms and the socialist economy as a whole. The state pension fund for collective farmers is replenished by the collective farms (more than 1,000 million rubles a year) and the state (400 million rubles a year). This is typical of the present period of communist construction and it reflects the process by which social differences are being eradicated. The pooling of public and collective farm social funds takes place in other fields (culture, education, etc.).

When the draft Rules of the Collective Farms were being discussed it was proposed that a single system of social security for collective farmers be introduced. This proposal affected millions of people. The Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers unanimously adopted a decision "On the Social Security of Collective Farmers" by which the system came into force on January 1, 1970. The required fund is replenished by deductions of 2.4 per cent from the wage fund. The decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On Measures for the Further Improvement of Social Security for Collective Farmers" introduced,

on June 3, 1971, the same rules for calculating pensions as for workers and office employees. So another distinction in social security was removed.

The coming together of the collective farm peasantry and the working class in the forms and extent of their share in the social wealth and in their level of prosperity is yielding practical results. Many young people now prefer to stay and work in agriculture. Secondary school-leavers are joining production teams and dairies. Servicemen also return to the country after demobilisation. Young people now decide to remain in their own localities rather than go off to towns.

III. PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

LEADERS OF COLLECTIVE FARMERS

As a result of the socialist transformation of the countryside there have been changes not only in the social and economic position of the peasantry, its production activity and welfare, but an increase in self-respect and widening of political horizons. Gleb Uspensky, the prominent Russian author and expert on the Russian country life, wrote at the end of the 19th century that the Russian peasant knew nothing about what was happening in the world and was not even interested in world events.

Socialism involved the peasant in political and public work, and in the struggle for communist ideals. Of course this took a great deal of time and effort.

That the difficult problems of the socialist re-education of small proprietors have long been solved is evidenced by the fact that the broad masses of the peasantry take an active part in asserting a new way of life and in the work of state organs of power and public organisations.

In the course of the struggle for socialism the working class and the peasantry drew close together in ideology and

level of political consciousness. The unity of the people and the Communist Party, the moral and political unity of Soviet society based on the alliance of the working class and the peasantry is a great historical accomplishment which ensures the successful solution of all tasks in the building of communism.

The period of developed socialism is marked by further growth in the significance of the Communist Party's role in Soviet society. The growing importance of the leadership of the Communist Party in the country's development is predetermined by the complexity of the tasks of communist construction which require higher standards of political and organisational leadership. The upsurge of the creative activity of the working people and their increasing participation in the management of state affairs and production, the advance of socialist democracy and the growing role of public organisations require that the Party continually improve the forms and methods of its activities so that its leadership is equal to the task of building communism.

The organisational role of village Party organisations and their work on economic and political tasks increased noticeably after the Party's 20th Congress. Party organisations improved the admission procedures and gave Communists a bigger part to play in solving economic problems. The army of Communists in collective and state farms grew in strength. By 1958 there were 1,350,000 Communists in collective farms.

This growth in the number of Communists improved organisational and political work in the countryside. In 1958 Party committees were established in large collective and state farms. Party groups were set up in dairies and teams. The personal participation of Communists in production and their good work helped Party organisations to exercise direct influence on all aspects of life in collective farms.

The activity of Party organisations became more purposeful, concrete and comprehensive. Communists were developing an increasing feeling of responsibility for all that was happening in collective farms. The Party organisations began to strengthen labour discipline, popularise advanced methods and encourage socialist emulation. They exercised

their right to control the economic activity of enterprises and began to influence production, go more deeply into economic questions, and study routine problems and ways of solving them. All this gave Communists greater authority in solving political, ideological and economic problems.

The following data illustrate the point. In 1937 there were 296,886 Communists in agriculture, 186,904 of them in collective farms; in 1947 there were 1,042,407 (761,194 in collective farms); in 1957—1,442,571 (931,340); in 1967—2,336,412 (1,330,316); as of January 1, 1967, 16 per cent of all Communists were collective farmers. In the period from 1957 to 1967 some 738,000 collective farmers joined the Party.

In 1969 Party organisations in collective farms had more than 1.6 million members or probationary members. Today Communists can be found in all key sectors of collective farm production.

Now there is a growing number of tractor and harvester drivers, machine operators and agricultural specialists joining the ranks of the Party. In 1956 only 19.8 per cent of the new probationary members were machine operators as compared with 39.4 per cent in 1966. The figures for agricultural specialists were 8.0 and 8.4 per cent respectively.

The growth of membership has considerably strengthened the primary Party organisations and bolstered their fighting spirit and initiative. There were 37,086 primary Party organisations as of January 1, 1967, each with an average of 35 Communists.

Addressing the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers in 1969, Leonid Brezhnev said: "Today over 5 million Communists, over 8 million Komsomol members and 15 million trade union members are living and working in the country. There is not a single collective farm or state farm today that does not have a Party organisation. The Communists are the recognised vanguard of the rural working people; they set an example in the work of advancing collective- and state- farm production."¹

Collective farmers take an active part in the work of district and regional committees of the Communist Party;

¹ L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1972, p. 247.

180,000 of them were elected members of the bureaux of Party organisations and committees as of January 1, 1971; collective farmers then accounted for 81.7 per cent of the members of the elected organs of Party organisations in collective farms.

Among the delegates to the 24th Party Congress there were 870 workers in agriculture, two-thirds of whom were ordinary collective farm and state farm workers, leaders of groups or teams, and managers of dairies.

THE PEASANTRY AND THE SOVIETS

The task of involving the population in the management of state and public affairs is being successfully carried out as part of the all-out construction of communism. This task was laid down at the dawning of the Soviet era by Lenin as a programme for the development of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Soviets, which came into being as the result of the revolutionary initiative of the masses, became a school of state administration and management for millions of workers and peasants. After the complete and ultimate victory of socialism, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat was transformed into a state of the whole people and became an instrument for expressing the interests and the will of the whole people. This is why Lenin's ideas on the overall involvement of the masses in the administration of state and public affairs have acquired such great significance in the present day. In the report to the 24th Party Congress Leonid Brezhnev said: "We see the meaning and content of socialist democracy in the increasingly broader participation of the masses in the administration of state and social affairs. In our country the entire political system of society and the steadily growing initiative of the people serve the building of communism. This sort of democracy is vital to us and it is an indispensable condition for the development and consolidation of socialist social relations."¹

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, p. 99.

The road to public self-government under communism lies in the further development and improvement of the socialist state and Soviet democracy. This is primarily expressed in the growing role of the Soviets in the solution of economic, social and other problems and the consolidation of public principles in their organisation and activity.

The decree of December 29, 1958, from the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet increased representation in all local Soviets, particularly those in rural areas. The number of deputies to village and settlement Soviets was increased to between 20 and 50 instead of from 15 to 35 as previously, in rural district Soviets the limits were extended from 35-60 to 40-80. Although many rural Soviets were amalgamated (as a result of this measure the number of village Soviets was reduced by 10,505 between January 1956 and April 1961), there was a considerable increase in the number of deputies. During the 1969 elections a total of 1,289,783 deputies were elected to 40,748 village Soviets. The rise in the number of deputies, especially the greater level of representation, was an important factor in increasing the activity and effectiveness of the Soviets.

The next important step in democratising and improving the work of organs of state power was the regular re-election of at least a third of the deputies and the regular replacement of the executive committees. Since 1959 there has been a 50 per cent turnover of deputies to village Soviets; for rural district Soviets the figure is between 50 and 75 per cent. The laws adopted in that year laid down the rules for recalling deputies who fail to justify the trust of the electorate or who are guilty of conduct incompatible with the honour and respect of the people's representatives. This has also increased the deputies' responsibility to the electorate and given the masses greater control over the work of their deputies.

Further extension of democratic principles in the organisation and activities of Soviets was seen in the greater rights and powers accorded to them as representative organs, i.e., the rights and powers of Soviet sessions and standing committees were greatly extended.

Village Soviets regularly discuss questions of economic

development, social, cultural and everyday services for the people, housing construction, public health, education and commerce. Reports on the activity of executive committees are now given frequently. The electorate is now beginning to take an active part in discussing questions of various kinds at Soviet sessions. Many Soviets hold circuit sessions in teams, dairies, schools and hospitals so as to involve as many people as possible in discussing local problems. This helps the Soviets to make a comprehensive study of the matter at hand and to activate people in implementing the decisions.

Standing committees are really mass organisations of Soviets; they are composed not only of deputies but many active electors. Advanced Soviets transfer some of the functions of their executive committees to the standing committees. This opens the way to a gradual transition from state administration to self-government.

The increase in public activity gave birth to new forms of deputy work outside the framework of permanently staffed or volunteer organs of Soviets. These include the deputy groups in large villages; the groups include all deputies in the locality irrespective of the electorate to which they belong. Thus the deputies to various Soviets can, if necessary, join forces in building schools, hospitals, cultural and service centres, etc.

The increasing importance of Soviets in the countryside makes greater demands on the deputies as representatives of the population who manage economic, social and cultural affairs. Today a deputy must be well versed in many fields. The cultural and technical level of the rural population has risen. Skilled workers, the foremost people in production, employed in teams and on farms, experts and young people have entered the Soviets. The number of deputies with higher or secondary education is increasing each year. In 1959 some 40.1 per cent of the deputies to the local Soviets had either a higher or secondary education; by 1965 the figure had risen to 44.1 per cent. Most of the deputies to village Soviets in Voronezh Region in 1927 were semi-literate, 12.7 per cent of them being altogether illiterate. Today 78 per cent have a higher or secondary education (including incomplete secondary education).

The deputies know the needs and concerns of their production sectors so they are competent in solving the problems which arise. It is significant that in the period 1959-1969 some 42 per cent of the deputies were Communists and 7-8 per cent Komsomol members.

The main trend in the further development of Soviets is the further strengthening of democratic principles.

Besides Soviets of Working People's Deputies the peasants have other forms of self-government—street councils, women's councils, comrades' courts, public inspectors, public order squads, etc. They all appeared on the initiative of the masses who are interested in improving living and working conditions in the villages. The most comprehensive independent action organisation is the village meeting.

The peasants participate directly in the work of the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and the Union republics which discuss the most important questions of home and foreign policy, decide on the principal questions of communist construction, institute the Soviet government and hear its reports. During the elections in 1967, 5,829 deputies were elected to the Supreme Soviets of the Union republics, 1,346 (23.1 per cent) of them being collective farmers. This even slightly exceeded the percentage of the collective farm peasantry amongst the total population. Of the 1,517 deputies elected on June 12, 1966, to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 698 were workers or peasants, more than 300 were engineers or technicians, and nearly 200 were agronomists or zootechnicians.

Deputies to the Supreme Soviets are not the only people to take an active part in deciding important questions of state. The broad participation of the masses in the management of state affairs is clearly expressed in the nation-wide discussions of draft laws on key questions of communist construction. The whole nation was involved in discussing the economic development plans of the USSR, the draft laws on pensions, education, further development of the collective farm system, reorganisation of MTS, and the draft Model Rules of Collective Farms.

The peasant shows himself as a real manager of the country who is interested in strengthening it and in increas-

ing its wealth. Lenin underlined this very feature, the principal one in socialist democracy: "...a state is strong when the people are politically conscious. It is strong when the people know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously."¹

THE COLLECTIVE FARMS: A SCHOOL OF COMMUNISM FOR PEASANTS

The idea of the collective farm as a school of communism is not an abstract one. It reflects the actual life in the Soviet countryside and the results of its socialist development. On the one hand, the collective farm system opens up broad horizons for achieving all-round development of the productive forces in agriculture and employing the advances of science and technology. This is a primary prerequisite for the creation of the material and technical basis of communism. On the other hand, collective farms, being co-operative enterprises, can act as schools of public self-government and as schools of communism for peasants. The Programme of the CPSU says: "By virtue of the social form of its economy—its organisational structure and democratic groundwork—which will develop more and more, the kolkhoz ensures that production is run by the kolkhoz members themselves, that their creative initiative is enhanced and that the collective farmers are educated in the communist spirit. The kolkhoz is a school of communism for peasantry."

The definition of the collective farm as a school of communism has now been included in the Model Rules of Collective Farms adopted by the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers.

Communism will not come by itself. People must learn to manage the economy and live in a communist way. The collective farm is a school where peasants learn rational methods of economic management, democratic administra-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 256.

tion of the artel's affairs, and communist principles. By successfully combining the private interests of farmers with the public interest, the collective farm reveals the vast potential for improving life and raising cultural and technical standards. The collective farm system is conditioned by deep-rooted social and economic factors in the development of the countryside. It stems from the existing relations in the Soviet countryside.

The forms of democratic management of artels are being continually developed and improved and more and more peasants are being involved in administration. On March 6, 1956, the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a decision "On the Rules of the Agricultural Artels and the Further Development of the Initiative of Collective Farmers in the Organisation of Collective Farm Production and in the Management of Artel Affairs". This decision allowed collective farms to amend the existing Rules of the Agricultural Artel. It increased initiative and encouraged farmers to find ways of improving management of artel affairs.

The increase in public activity of the peasantry became more pronounced after the collective farms were given additional rights in deciding such questions as planning of production and remuneration.

Where once farmers' main vehicle for participating in the management of artel affairs was the general meeting and board meeting, in recent years they have done so through team meetings, team councils, councils of elders under the boards of collective farms, public boards for planning and economic analysis, socialist emulation committees, technical councils, etc.

After the amalgamation of small farms it became difficult to hold general meetings, so the functions of the general meeting were transferred, with the farmers' consent, to meetings of representatives sitting four times a year. The representatives are elected by the show of hands at team meetings for a term of two years. They make decisions on all the principal affairs of the artel—election of boards and their chairmen, approval of production plans, forms of organisation and remuneration of labour, granting of membership, expulsion of members, etc.

In recent years collective forms of management within the teams themselves have acquired particular significance due to the functions of production teams being extended. These include general team meetings and team councils. Team meetings elect leaders, discuss plans of farm work, questions of production discipline, material incentives and the terms of socialist emulation. They elect councils of 9 to 11 members from farmers who are most active in production and public work.

These democratic organs of management mould the social consciousness of the collective farmer, contribute to his development as a person and fight against individualism in the conduct of certain members.

These new forms of democratic management—team meetings and team councils—have now been granted legal status in the Model Rules.

In recent years the growing influence of Party and Komsomol organisations has been matched by that of trade union groups. They were first organised in 1958 when machine operators and specialists were transferred to collective farms from MTS. So far the trade union members in collective farms consist of machine operators and other skilled workers. In a short space of time the trade unions have shown themselves to be effective aids to Party organisations in exercising control over the improvement of production, and communal and cultural standards. They also supervise socialist emulation and the work of inventors and innovators. One of their basic tasks is to see that socialist laws, production hygiene and safety precautions are observed. Trade unions are also active in arranging recreation and sport facilities.

The spread of new forms of self-government increases the number of farmers involved in the management of the social affairs of artels.

This widespread participation follows from the social and collectivist essence of the artel. By uniting peasants in work the collective farm overcomes their isolation and petty-ownership psychology.

The socialist system has radically transformed the peasant psychology. The peasant-individualist has given way to the peasant-collectivist—a free toiler with equal rights in the

social economy. This complicated social, economic and psychological process is still going on, but already we see the evolution of a new, socialist peasant who gives priority to the interests of the collective and society as a whole. The individualistic, petty-ownership psychology is a thing of the past. Soviet collective farmer is the master of a new life.

One of the most important features of the new, socialist psychology of peasants is their attitude towards social labour. Labour in the social economy is a matter of honour, valour and heroism.

The main features of relations between collective farmers are comradely co-operation, mutual assistance and joint efforts for increasing the wealth of their collective farms (and, as a consequence, their own prosperity) and that of the country as a whole. Relations between collective farmers in the field of production are illustrated by a poll conducted at the Rossiya Collective Farm. One of the questions was: "Do you help your workmates?" 92 per cent answered "yes" and only 8 per cent "no". Another question was: "How do you help your fellow workers?" The farmers selected which of the following methods they favoured: exchanging experience—30 per cent; giving assistance to the inefficient—39.8 per cent; giving assistance to young workers—52.2 per cent; training in new professions—6.4 per cent; assisting rivals in socialist emulation—11.3 per cent. In answer to the question: "What is your aim in life?" (each person could submit several answers) 78 per cent replied "to do an interesting job" and 70.5 per cent said "to work where one was needed most"; only 4.5 per cent named wealth, and 8.6 per cent fame as their aim in life. The column "Life Without Useful Work for Society" remained unfilled.

People's ideas on the aim and value of life have changed radically. Once upon a time to "live well" meant having enough food but now, as sociologists in Orel Region have shown, it means both being reasonably well-off and having the opportunity to spend one's leisure time reading books, listening to the radio or watching television. Young collective farmers consider that having the right conditions to satisfy their recreational needs is extremely important in

life. All this points to the growth of a communist attitude towards labour and to the fact that the peasants are becoming very conscious of communist responsibilities.

The increasing political awareness of farmers and their heightened sense of responsibility for collective farms were expressed in numerous proposals, made during public discussion of the Model Rules, to set up general collective farm self-government bodies. So the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers passed a resolution "On the Inauguration of Councils of Collective Farms". These councils are set up in districts, territories, republics and at the nation-wide level. They are elected on democratic principles. As indicated in the resolution, the councils' aim is to "further develop collective farm democracy and collective discussion of the most important questions concerning life and work in collective farms, to generalise experience in the organisation of production and work out recommendations for better utilisation of reserves in the growth of the social economy".

The creation of the councils was another major step forward in the development of democratic forms of self-government in the country. By the beginning of 1970 collective farm councils had been set up in 2,362 districts. In the Russian Federation 37,000 people, including 28,000 of the leading crop-growers and livestock-breeders sit on the councils.

Under socialism the peasant, who was once a downtrodden, illiterate man without any rights, became an equal member of Soviet society, the master of his own fate and an active builder of communism. Today one can see peasants at the collective farm conference table, on the rostrum at congresses of the CPSU, at sessions of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers, and amongst delegations sent abroad. The class isolation of the peasantry has gone forever, and with it the old concept of the peasant. Collective farms have been schools not only of economic management and administration in which the peasant learns how to manage the farm rationally making use of technological achievements and advanced methods, but of communist education where the old peasant psychology is remoulded and communist morals and ideology absorbed.

IV. CULTURE AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE COUNTRY TODAY

GROWTH OF EDUCATION

Socialism has completely reshaped the Soviet countryside. Not only has it given a tremendous boost to its productive forces, and to social and political progress, but also brought about a blossoming of cultural life. Striking changes in all aspects of the Soviet peasant's life have occurred during the years of Soviet power.

There remain, however, considerable differences between urban and rural cultural standards; the country is lagging behind the town in the level of the population's ideological and cultural development and in the standard of cultural and communal services. The Programme of the CPSU says: "*Elimination of social, economic and cultural distinctions between town and country and of differences in their living conditions will be one of the greatest gains of communist construction.*"¹

The most important way of eradicating these differences and distinctions is to raise systematically the general educational level of peasants. The young Soviet state inherited mass illiteracy from tsarist Russia. According to the census of 1897 only 23.8 per cent of the rural population in the age group 9-49 was literate. In 1913 Lenin wrote: "There is no other country so barbarous and in which the masses of the people are *robbed* to such an extent of education, light and knowledge—no other such country has remained in Europe; Russia is the exception."² From the very beginning of socialist construction in the countryside, the Communist Party declared that the elimination of illiteracy was one of the most important political and economic tasks. In 1926 50.6 per cent of the rural population was literate; in 1939 the figure was 84 per cent; in 1959 98.2 per cent; and in 1970 99.5 per cent literacy had been achieved in the country. As these figures indicate, the problem has been

¹ *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 58.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 139.

almost completely solved. This has been one of the greatest cultural and social achievements of Soviet power. The peasants have learnt to read and write. Now the task is to obtain secondary and higher education.

In 1939 some 62 people had higher or specialised secondary education (including incomplete secondary education) per 1,000 of the working population in the countryside; in 1959 the figure was 316, and in 1970—499. At the end of 1970 more than half of the rural population had a complete secondary or higher education. This is one of the greatest triumphs of Soviet society.

Before the revolution not one worker or peasant had a secondary, not to mention higher, education. In 1926 less than 1.5 per cent of manual workers had a secondary education, and in 1939 there were 4.3 per cent. By 1959 some 31.6 per cent of manual workers had either a secondary or incomplete higher education (39 per cent in the case of workers and 21 per cent for farmers). The level of education of machine operators and other skilled farm workers has come up to that of industrial workers. In 1939 only 21 out of every 1,000 tractor drivers had more than seven years' education, in 1959 the proportion was 336 per 1,000. The corresponding figures for harvester drivers are 35 and 391; for group leaders—23 and 301, and livestock-breeders—5 and 204.

There is still quite a gap in the level of education of different social groups in the countryside. State farm workers are generally better educated than collective farmers since state farms are technically better equipped and the standards of training there are higher. In 1959 only 1 out of every 1,000 workers in collective farms had complete higher education (8 in state farms); 10 (23) had specialised secondary education and 217 (251) general secondary education.

A great leap forward has been made in the education of female farm workers. In the period from 1939 to 1959 the number of women with higher or secondary education per 1,000 female collective farmers increased from 10 to 198 (cf. men: 24 to 260). Socialism has given women an equal status in society and the home, and created the right conditions for them to develop in every possible way.

Radical changes have been made in the education of the rural population in the national republics of the USSR. Before the revolution, the Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Turkmens did not even have a written language of their own or schools where lessons were given in their own language. Almost nobody had a higher education in those republics. The situation has changed drastically during the years of Soviet power. In 1959 96.8 per cent of the rural population in the 9-49 age-group in Kazakhstan were literate as against 6.3 per cent in 1897; in Kirghizia the figure was 98.1 per cent (2.3 per cent), in Tajikistan 96.5 per cent (1.8 per cent), and in Turkmenia 95.2 per cent (2.5 per cent). The data on education of collective farmers in these republics is just as revealing. In 1959 there were 226 farmers with higher or secondary (complete and incomplete) out of every 1,000 collective farmers employed in production in the USSR (cf. 17 in 1939), 243 (cf. 15) in Kazakhstan, 278 (cf. 4) in Kirghizia, 312 (cf. 3) in Tajikistan, and 430 (cf. 8) in Turkmenia. The average level of education in those republics was even higher than the nation-wide average. This is explained by the highly mechanised cultivation of such staple crops as cotton, grain and sugar beet. In these republics there is a large percentage of machine operators and specialists amongst collective farmers.

Raising the general educational level of the rural population helps close the educational gap between the working class and the peasantry, increases the social mobility of the latter, facilitates the transition from one class to another, and contributes to the rational combination of physical and mental work.

Lenin's dream of universal literacy has become a reality. The task now is to improve the technical and humanitarian education of the Soviet people.

NEW ASPECTS OF THE SOVIET PEASANT'S MENTAL OUTLOOK

The mental outlook of the peasantry has changed beyond recognition. There has been a growth in non-material needs and their interest in the country's political and

cultural life. This is shown by the annual increase in the number of subscribers to newspapers and magazines, and the number of people who go to films and attend lectures. Newspapers, radio and television are now part and parcel of country life.

The number of books in village libraries increased from 64.2 million in 1940 to 524.5 million in 1967. The following figures illustrate the popularity of books among villagers: in 1940 there were 1.4 million readers, in 1950—5.9 million, in 1965—29.4 million, and in 1967—33.3 million. Literature has become very popular as data from collective farm libraries will confirm.

The mass reading of newspapers and books in villages is a common daily occurrence. Circulations in the millions are no longer a rarity, but comparisons are quite significant: whereas in 1913 there were only two newspapers and 62 books per 100 people in Russia, in 1965 there were 40 newspapers, 25 magazines and 550 books.

In 1967 readers borrowed on average 16.5 books and magazines from village libraries each year (cf. 21.8 in towns). In 1970 people in rural areas went 17 times a year to the cinema (21 times in the case of the city dweller). All this points to the fact that the countryside is catching up with the towns in the field of culture and education.

The growth of education and culture in the countryside gives rise to a widespread materialist outlook. Knowledge destroys the last strongholds of religious belief. In pre-war years there was a successful onslaught against religious ideology, but religious beliefs remained strong in the countryside because of the war. The church took advantage of the sorrow and grief of people to kindle religious feelings among the backward villagers. Anti-religious propaganda in those years was inadequate.

In the countryside life itself undermined religious beliefs in the most effective and vigorous way. Rising living standards, electrification, and radio, books and newspapers were the most important instruments in shaping the atheist outlook.

The influence of science, atheistic propaganda and life itself are gradually reducing the number of believers. According to sociological and ethnographic research carried

out in recent years, most of the believers are people born before the revolution. A poll conducted in 1962 in villages around Moscow indicated that only 10 to 17 per cent of the inhabitants were religious, and that 78.7 per cent of these were women; 55 per cent of the believers were over 60 years of age, 39 per cent were between 45 and 60, and only 6 per cent below 45.

Many of the religious rites are "traditional". They are performed habitually and not from a genuine belief in the existence of God. Believers often do not fast, know no prayers and carry no crosses. Some doubt the existence of God but believe "just in case". Icons are frequently kept in homes on the insistence of the old people. These facts prove that the religious beliefs of even the old generation do not go very deep.

One of the most important tasks of our time is the communist education of the collective farm peasantry and of the whole population. In the process, the peasantry draws closer to the working class and the intelligentsia in ideology, culture and intellectual life. The result will be the birth of a new man, well developed both in body and in mind.

MODERNISATION OF VILLAGES

In the building of communism it is vital to overcome the considerable differences between town and countryside in terms of culture and communal facilities and in the nature and organisation of everyday life. In the years of Soviet power great improvements have been made in the well-being of the peasantry. A comparison of the past and present illustrates the point most clearly. In 1901-1907 A. Shingarev, a country doctor, investigated the Novozhivotinnoye and Mokhovatka villages in Voronezh Gubernia. In his book *The Dying Countryside* he wrote: "Early in the morning the air is heavy with the stink of men, animals, earth floor and dirty clothes; a man entering from the street suffocates and almost faints." The peasant's hut was squalid. There was nothing on the walls or the floor, kitchen utensils were

scarce, people slept on the floor or on benches. There were no blankets or pillows; peasants usually slept on straw using their clothes for pillows. In Mokhovatka peasants consumed no more than some 12 grams of sugar a year.

Today there is electricity and a radio relay system in Novozhivotinnoye. The village has its own club, library, secondary school (with boarders), a museum, a school of music, a bakery, a dairy, a café, three shops, a tailor's, a shoemaker's, and a hairdresser's. There is plenty of trees and greenery. The brick cottages of 3 to 4 rooms have good outhouses. The modern furniture in the houses satisfies the needs and is suitable for the way of life of the families. There are beds, sofas, tables of various kinds, chairs instead of benches, tasteful curtains and pictures, and carpets. Nearly all families have TV or radio sets, bicycles, motorcycles. Some families have even cars.

The changes brought about after the revolution in these villages have been repeated all over the Soviet Union.

The Soviet state gives a great deal of assistance to collective farms in strengthening the material base of culture and everyday life. Deductions into the cultural and communal funds are increasing. In 1960-1968 these deductions were increased by a factor of almost seven. The collective farms are constantly improving the cultural and living conditions of their members.

Building is constantly in progress in villages. In 1959-1965 collective farms erected 3,510,000 houses; in 1966-1970 they built 93.2 million square metres of useful living area; in the last 12 years more than 6 million farmers' families have moved into new houses. In 1966-1970 collective farms built enough clubs to accommodate 4.2 million people, schools for 4.6 million pupils, and hospitals for 80,000 patients. The collective farms paid 49 per cent of the cost of schools, 80 per cent of the cost of clubs, 60 per cent of the cost of children's institutions, and 47 per cent of the cost of hospitals. In 1970 there were 116,000 clubs, 90,700 libraries and 133,200 cinemas in the countryside.

Reconstruction of villages themselves is next on the agenda. The Party has put forward the task of building new, socialist villages instead of the old hamlets which came into being as the result of individual peasant farming and which

still exist because the peasant family remains one of the production cells of society. Amalgamation of collective farms, withering-away of family farmsteads and improvement of living and cultural standards prepares the way for the transformation of collective farm villages into enlarged urban-type settlements with blocks of flats, cultural centres and community facilities.

The villages are passing through an era of reconstruction. They are changing their face. Building work is more and more often being carried out on the basis of architectural projects which take into account the development and location of the various branches of the economy, housing and communal requirements.

The size of settlements must conform to the needs of agricultural production, optimal housing conditions and cultural requirements. Surveys are being made to establish which settlements are to be modernised and which hamlets are to be moved to larger villages.

Many modern villages have already appeared. The Bolshevik Collective Farm in Vladimir Region is a beautiful town of standard cottages with running water, sewerage system, bathrooms, gas and gardens. There is a club, a large library, a boarding school, telephone exchange, an agricultural centre with laboratories, a child-welfare centre, a department store, a services centre and a post-office.

A few years ago one could only see crooked huts with tiny windows in the village of Lutskovlyani, now the administrative centre of the Avangard Collective Farm in Grodno District, Byelorussia. Today there is a Palace of Culture, a secondary school, an office block for the farm administration and many small blocks of flats. All the costs, including the cost of a house for teachers, have been met by the farm. The streets have been covered with asphalt, pavements have been laid to the workshops and the cattle farm. All houses are provided with gas, running water and electricity.

This "new look" of villages and the reconstruction of their life and culture can be seen in every part of the Soviet Union today.

In September 1968 the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a resolution on improv-

ing building work in villages which laid down a programme for the reconstruction of villages. The programme envisaged the organisation of complex experimental construction of settlements for collective and state farms. In the period 1969-1975 model collective and state farm settlements are to be built in all parts of the country using the most advanced planning methods, new types of apartment blocks and community buildings. The experiment is designed to help in the selection of the most convenient, comfortable and economic houses for the present and the future.

The Komsomol organisation is rendering great assistance in rural building work. Volunteer student detachments in 1959-1965 had a work force of nearly 100,000 people.

In recent years Komsomol members and youth have played an increasingly important part in transforming the face of villages.

Under two- and three-year plans of cultural construction of their own, in the period from 1966 to 1968 Komsomol members built more than 12,000 clubs, 16,000 open-air cinemas, 350 cinemas, 2,000 libraries; they have laid out 4,000 parks and gardens.

Building work in the countryside became one of the most important tasks of the Komsomol on the eve of the centenary of Lenin's birth. In December 1968 the plenary meeting of Komsomol's Central Committee adopted a resolution on the two-year (1969-1970) "Komsomol Assistance to Rural Schools" campaign. During the campaign the Komsomol organisations in industrial enterprises, on construction sites, in transport, higher and secondary educational establishments, research institutes and army units took an active part in the building and repairing of schools, teachers' houses and simple sports facilities.

Komsomol teams and student detachments have built 812 schools, 313 boarding-schools, 971 houses for teachers, 543 gymnasiums (quite apart from the participation of Komsomol members in construction work carried out by other organisations). In addition, Komsomol organisations equipped more than 4,500 classes, 20,000 stadiums and sports grounds, 3,143 canteens and snack bars, 3,219 workshops and 4,385 libraries. With the money they earned on Satur-

days and Sundays the Komsomol members bought laboratory and sports equipment for schools and detachments of Young Pioneers.

Students in the Ukraine, in Moscow, Leningrad and Kuibyshev worked in the summer of 1969 in honour of the centenary of Lenin's birth. More than 160,000 young people took part in the two-year "Komsomol Assistance to Rural Schools" campaign.

Improvement of cultural life in the countryside depends to a great extent on the supply of water, fuel and electricity. The programme of modernisation envisages much work in this respect.

Every year more and more village houses are switching to gas. At the end of 1965 some 616,000 houses in the countryside were on gas. By the end of 1970 the number had increased more than sevenfold to reach 4,646,700.

The electrification of villages is nearing completion.

GROWING PROSPERITY AND DEMAND

The rising incomes of collective farmers have raised their demand for consumer goods. This is corroborated by the increasing turnover of state and co-operative trade in the countryside. In 1940 a rural inhabitant made purchases or ordered services to the average sum of 39 rubles in village shops and public catering enterprises; in 1970 the sum went up to 334 rubles. The per capita trade turnover in the countryside increased nearly ninefold.

The amount of foodstuffs purchased is growing all the time. In 1968 sales of meat increased by 40 per cent compared with 1964, and those of animal fats and sausages—by 150 per cent.

The rural population now buys more clothes, footwear, furniture and items for cultural use. In 1966-1970 village shops sold more than 8.6 million radio sets and radiograms, 7.6 million television sets, 2.7 million refrigerators and nearly 1.8 million motorcycles and scooters. Country people are demanding more and more goods which were once regarded as the preserve of city dwellers.

The demand for quality has also risen. Goods which are not in demand in towns do not sell in the countryside, as was once the case. Villagers prefer fashionable things, particularly ladies' boots.

The growing demand is a typical and very important feature in the development of the countryside today. It reflects the desire for a new culture and is a stimulus for hard work.

The scope and variety of demands, in turn, grow as a result of the sweeping changes now taking place in the economic and cultural life of the countryside.

The Communist Party is doing all it can to eradicate the differences between urban and village living standards.

In recent years the service sphere in villages has been considerably extended. Canteens are to be found in many of the leading collective farms, and hot meals are served even in the fields. This is not, however, the case in all farms and many families continue to take their own bread.

Farmers have quickly appreciated the advantages of refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, washing machines, and electrical devices. Rental shops are opening up everywhere and there is now a network of repair shops.

The Baltic republics are very experienced in the organisation of village services. In Latvia, for instance, district agencies have opened many local mobile service offices; new department stores, cafés and service centres are being commissioned yearly. Many farms have built service centres from their own funds. The outlay is quickly recovered because the people willingly avail themselves of the services. It is significant that expenditure on services in family budgets in Latvia have increased threefold in the past five years in the case of farmers as against twofold in the case of workers.

Advanced collective farms are allocating more and more funds for communal services.

In 1970 the amount of services was doubled in comparison to 1965 in the country as a whole, and trebled in the countryside. Now there are 184,700 service enterprises, including 76,700 in rural areas,—an increase of 51,400 over 1965.

However, the level of services is still not high enough in the country. Much has yet to be done to bring urban and rural standards closer together. The Directives for the country's economic development in 1971-1975 envisage a 100 per cent rise in the amount of services in the country as a whole, and a 180 per cent rise in rural areas.

The progress of culture and communist education in the countryside is closely linked with the transformation of rural life. Living standards make a strong impact on the education of the new man and the formation of his various tastes and his outlook. Creation of good living conditions in villages will bring urban and rural living standards closer together. This will be an important step in communist construction in the countryside.

CONCLUSION

The Narodniks, who were the predecessors of Russian Marxists in the revolutionary movement, accused them of trying to turn everybody into proletarians and throwing the Russian peasant into the boiling kettle of capitalism. More than seventy years have passed since the heated debates between the Narodniks and the Marxists, and history has long since settled the argument.

In October 1917 the world's greatest revolution of the people, of which the peasant war against the feudal landlords was a constituent part, brought to power not the Socialist-Revolutionaries who were the epigoni of the Narodniks and who regarded themselves as the peasant party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, but the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Russian proletariat. The country with a predominantly peasant population put its fate in the hands of the Communist Party. As a result, capitalism was destroyed before it had succeeded in boiling the Russian peasant in the factory kettle. The peasantry was saved from the lengthy and painful process of "depeasantisation", from poverty and ruin, and from exploitation by the kulak upper crust.

The agrarian problem occupied an important place in the socialist transformation of Russia. Solving this problem was essential in constructing socialist society, in making a great leap forward from backwardness to progress in a historically short period of time. Lenin's co-operative plan indicated the ways and conditions for the gradual and voluntary transition to collective farming, and to the active participation of the peasantry in building socialism and communism. Thanks to this plan the problems of building a society free from

exploitation of man by man and subsequently of a classless society are being solved without any resort to general proletarianisation. Socialism has saved the peasantry as a class, though it has undergone many social, economic, cultural and psychological changes. The most pronounced differences between it and the working class have been eradicated. The Programme of the CPSU says that on the basis of Lenin's co-operative plan the eternal peasant problem has been given an authentic solution.

The successes of socialist agriculture and the heroic efforts of the collective farm peasantry are basic prerequisites for the country's transition to communism. The collective farms, which have grown much stronger today, are successfully fulfilling the task set by the Communist Party—they ensure stable and high development of agriculture and create an abundance of food for the population and raw materials for industry.

In the developed socialist society the gradual withering away of the distinctions between workers, peasants and the intelligentsia is becoming more and more distinct. Collective farming ensures the transition of the Soviet peasantry to a classless society with national ownership of the means of production, where, on the basis of a huge growth of productive forces, human personality will be developed, and that wealthy and prosperous society will be guided by the great principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs".

The past and the present of the Soviet peasantry is a testimony to the historical truth of Leninism.



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